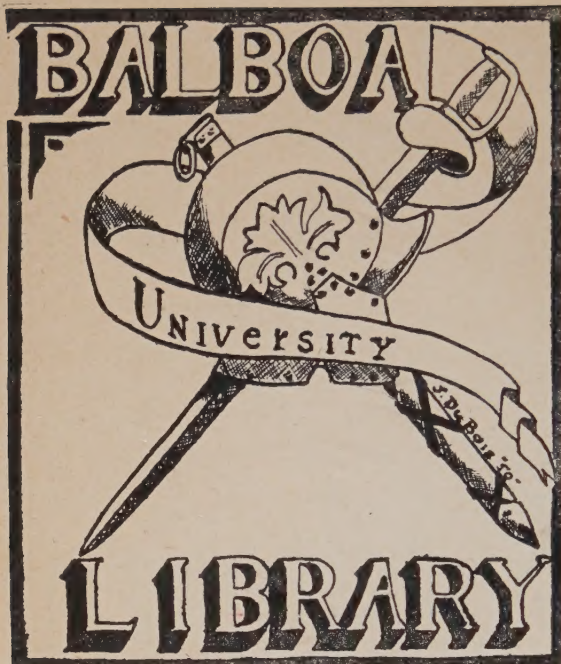






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THE BURNING BUSH





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# THE BURNING BUSH

THE STORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN ALL LANDS  
TOLD MAINLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

BY

J. R. FLEMING, B.D.



EDINBURGH : T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET

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TO  
REV. GEORGE D. MATHEWS, D.D.  
AND  
THE FATHERS AND BRETHREN  
OF THE  
GENERAL PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE





# CONTENTS.

| CHAP.                                                        | PAGE |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| FOREWORD BY REV. A. SMELLIE D.D.                             | ix   |
| INTRODUCTION . . . . .                                       | xi   |
| I. A GREAT MOTTO . . . . .                                   | I    |
| II. THE EARLY PRESBYTERS . . . . .                           | 7    |
| III. THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMA-<br>TION . . . . .        | 12   |
| IV. JOHN CALVIN AND GENEVA . . . . .                         | 18   |
| V. COLIGNY AND THE HUGUENOTS . . . . .                       | 26   |
| VI. WILLIAM OF ORANGE AND THE DUTCH<br>HEROES . . . . .      | 34   |
| VII. THE ISRAEL OF THE ALPS . . . . .                        | 43   |
| VIII. THE CHURCH OF THE BOOK AND THE<br>CUP . . . . .        | 50   |
| IX. AMONG THE MAGYARS. HERE AND<br>THERE IN EUROPE . . . . . | 57   |
| X. JOHN KNOX AND THE KIRK OF SCOT-<br>LAND . . . . .         | 63   |
| XI. ANDREW MELVILLE, SCHOLAR AND<br>PATRIOT . . . . .        | 71   |
| XII. SIGNING THE COVENANT . . . . .                          | 77   |
| XIII. UNDER THE BANNER OF BLUE . . . . .                     | 83   |

| CHAP.                                                            | PAGE |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| XIV. MARTYRS FOR FAITH AND FREEDOM .                             | 91   |
| XV. MARROWMEN AND SECEDERS . . .                                 | 99   |
| XVI. MODERATES AND EVANGELICALS .                                | 107  |
| XVII. THOMAS CHALMERS AND THE FREE<br>KIRK . . . . .             | 113  |
| XVIII. NORMAN MACLEOD AND THE AULD<br>KIRK . . . . .             | 121  |
| XIX. JOHN CAIRNS AND THE UNITED PRES-<br>BYTERIAN KIRK . . . . . | 128  |
| XX. UNION IN SCOTLAND . . . . .                                  | 136  |
| XXI. THE STALWARTS OF ULSTER . . .                               | 143  |
| XXII. PRESBYTERIANS IN ENGLAND . .                               | 151  |
| XXIII. THE AWAKING OF WALES . . .                                | 161  |
| XXIV. ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. . . . .                               | 170  |
| XXV. PIONEERING IN CANADA . . . . .                              | 180  |
| XXVI. UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS . .                               | 189  |
| XXVII. TO EARTH'S REMOTEST BOUND . .                             | 199  |
| XXVIII. ONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH . .                              | 210  |
| XXIX. THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE . .                               | 219  |
| INDEX . . . . .                                                  | 223  |

## FOREWORD.

THERE was need that this book should be written, and I know of no one who could write it more effectively and more attractively than Mr. Fleming. We, Presbyterians of the twentieth century, have grown too unmindful of the famous names and the pregnant events of our memorable and moving past. It has, indeed, been most truly said that "the Church of Christ has no liberty to become the slave even of its own history," because, while "history is great, Christ is greater," and "He is a present Lord with a present will"; in that present will of Jesus Christ His Church abides, and thrives, and goes from strength to strength. But our present would not be half so rich and fruitful as it is, if there did not stretch behind it the mighty years of the Right Hand of the Most High; and it is a shallow and unintelligent religion which is oblivious of these. So Mr. Fleming has done well to recall them; and because his knowledge is so ample, his personal familiarity with many of the Churches he describes so singular and rare, and his love for his theme so true and wise and deep, he has given us a book which makes us all his debtors.

ALEXANDER SMELLIE.



## INTRODUCTION.

THE purpose of this book is stated on the title-page.

It is to tell the story of the Presbyterian Church in all lands, mainly for young people. The Burning Bush emblem is chosen as a kind of leading motive, recurring with more or less emphasis.

That the story is a great one, and worth the telling, few will deny. Hitherto it has been known too much in part, too little as a living whole. While not forgetting its special character, we have tried to place it in its world-setting and universal appeal. Here, surely, we find enough of romantic interest to kindle the enthusiasm of youth, and of intense meaning to impress mature age. And what we can thus learn from one Church we may learn from all Churches. The day is past for mere sectarian histories. Our aim is but to show that Presbyterians have no reason to be ashamed of their contribution to the making of a truly catholic Christendom.

Prominence is given to the moving incidents and picturesque situations in which the history abounds. A slight framework of biography has been sought when possible, and a certain amount of local colouring for the

sake of vividness in the narrative. Occasionally we have introduced touches of personal reminiscence. And we have pointed to the attractive light that historical fiction often sheds on the course of events. In these ways it is hoped to gain the attention of a generation that needs to be allured to serious reading.

There is a passage in Sir Walter Scott's preface to his *Tales of a Grandfather* which may be quoted as reflecting to some extent our experience. "The compiler may here mention that after commencing his task in a manner obvious to the most limited capacity, he was led to take a different view of the subject by finding that a style considerably more elevated was more interesting to his juvenile readers. There is no harm but, on the contrary, there is benefit in presenting a child with ideas somewhat beyond his easy and immediate comprehension. The difficulties thus offered, if not too great or too frequent, stimulate curiosity and encourage exertion."

Sir Walter was writing in the first instance for a very young boy. We do not write for children, but for young people of adolescent age and upwards as well as for all who are content with a simple and rather elementary treatment. Still we feel the caution to be the more necessary, and are glad to have the lofty example of "Grandfather" Scott for our encouragement when we venture at times on a "more elevated" style.

In view of the book being used by teachers and others desiring fuller information, we have indicated in the notes appended to the chapters works which may be



relied upon for further study. The limits of space have often compelled us against our will to give only a bare outline of famous and momentous happenings.

It remains to acknowledge with much gratitude the kindness of those who have rendered us invaluable help. Dr. Smellie has been good enough to write a very generous "Foreword." Dr. Drysdale of Morpeth has carefully read the final proofs. Dr. Hay Fleming, Professor Heron of Belfast, Rev. D. Jenkins of Denbigh, and Dr. Kennedy of Edinburgh New College Library, have out of their wealth of knowledge guided me to information on special points. My friends the Rev. John Cairns and the Rev. R. Mackenzie have aided much with counsel and suggestion. Rev. J. Reid Howatt first suggested the undertaking of the book; Rev. G. S. Carson of Halifax, N.S., has assured it of a welcome on the other side of the Atlantic; Dr. James Hastings and the publishers have sped it bravely on its way.

I have honestly sought to follow the best and latest authorities, and to treat disputed questions without prejudice. My debt to various books is too large to mention, but I must note in particular how much I owe to Dr. J. N. Ogilvie's *Presbyterian Churches; Their Place and Power in Modern Christendom*, the only previous attempt I know to cover the same ground.

J. R. F.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,  
May 1913.



# THE BURNING BUSH

## CHAPTER I.

### A GREAT MOTTO.

WE begin our journey of many centuries at the ancient sign of the Burning Bush. Opening our Bible at the third chapter of the Book of Exodus, we find an old-world story which is at the same time a parable.

Moses was in the desert of Sinai, keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law. In that waste of rock and sand, broken only by the grand mountain scenery and some thorny shrubs growing here and there, he saw a strange sight.

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. As he looked, expecting to see the bush burnt up, he was amazed to find that while the flames leaped and danced among the branches on every side, they seemed to do no damage. The thorny shrub was still there though the fire blazed, and Moses could not understand how such a thing was

possible. Then he heard the voice of God, and God showed him how all this was a sign of His presence and of His goodwill towards Israel. It meant that He would stand by the people whom He had chosen, preserving them through all trouble and bringing them out of the land of bondage into a good land "flowing with milk and honey." So the bush burning but not consumed sets forth in a bold and memorable figure the whole history of the Jewish race. For not only were they delivered from Egypt and led safely to Canaan. Again and again when they appeared to be dead as a nation God revived them, and even to-day, after fire and sword and persecution have done their worst, the old stock of Israel remains as a monument of His care and love.

"NEC TAMEN CONSUMEBATUR." You have perhaps seen in books or magazines the emblem of a Burning Bush with these words inscribed around it. Rendered into English they mean "Nor yet was it being consumed." We must remember that for a very long period the Bible most read in Europe was in the Latin language which all folk who had a good education were supposed to know. That is why so many old mottoes taken from the Bible are in Latin.<sup>1</sup> This, as we have seen, was a sign to Moses of the salvation of Israel. The words

<sup>1</sup> The actual words "*Nec tamen consumebatur*" are taken from the Protestant Latin translation of Tremellius and his son-in-law Junius: Frankfort, 1579. This translation was largely in favour with Protestants as against the Vulgate, whose rendering here is "*Videbat quod rubus arderet et non combureretur.*"

are equally true of the Christian Church which is the modern Israel, and we hope to show in this little history how true they are of that branch of the Church—the Presbyterian—which has chosen them as a motto.

For nineteen hundred years the Church of Jesus has been like a bush burning but still living on. It has often had no great appearance in the eyes of men, and they have despised it like a thorny shrub in the wilderness, all the more because it seemed to be passing through a fiery trial that would make an end of it altogether. But the end has never come, and never will come, because God has been in the midst from the beginning, and the fire is just the fire of His love. It is, indeed, a miracle how the Church has been preserved all down the ages—saved as by fire to be a witness of God's grace.

In Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* we read that when Christian was in the Interpreter's house he was shown a place where was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by always casting much water upon it to quench it, and yet the fire burned higher and hotter. This was to him as strange a sight as the Burning Bush was to Moses, and it really taught much the same lesson. The explanation of the wonder was to be found on the other side of the wall, where the pilgrim saw a man with a vessel of oil in his hand of which he cast some, but secretly, into the fire. The man was Christ, Who keeps the fire alive, and is stronger than the devil who tries to put it out.

The most important thing about the Bush is not the poor wood of which it is composed, but the fire of God which while seeming to burn it up really keeps it all aglow with life, and makes it a Light of Truth from age to age. That is what the Church is—God's Holy Light burning on and on through the lives of men and women and children in the world, lives that are of small account in themselves, but that count for much in Him.

Now the story of the Presbyterian Church in all lands, which we are to tell, is the story of a Bush burning but not consumed. In order to understand it rightly you must, like Moses, turn aside from other things for a while, and see this great sight. And remember, it is not a fairy tale or mere romance—beautiful, but not true. It is all fact—the history of what has happened since the day when Jesus and His Apostles gave the vision of the Church to a world that was wandering in the wilderness.

We shall read of many a fierce trial, many a deadly peril, many a scorching flame that threatened the Church's life, yet after all only tended to make her stronger and purer and more faithful. There will pass before you a noble army of brave soldiers who fought for the truth on earth, and have now obtained the crown in heaven. And in their striving they were ever cheered by the vision that meant for them a promise—that against the Church founded by their Lord the gates of hell would not prevail.

So let us who are the descendants of these great warriors of God take up the parable of the Burning Bush

as our own, and look for its lessons in the history we go on to study together.

How the Burning Bush came to be the emblem of the Presbyterian Church, and the words "Nec tamen consumebatur" her motto, is an interesting question, and as no clear account of the matter is to be found except in stray articles in periodicals, it may not be out of place even in a history intended mainly for young people, to give the latest results of research.

The first distinct trace is in 1583, when at a Synod of the French Reformed Church held at Vitré it was resolved that a seal should be made for the use of the Synod, having a burning bush engraved on it, and round the circle "Flagror, non consumor" (I am being burned but not consumed). (Another form of this Huguenot motto is "Combuero, non consumor.") Something not unlike this seems also to have been the seal of the Waldensian Church—a taper burning in a golden candlestick, scattering its beams in a field of thick darkness.

So far as we know, the earliest use of the emblem in Scotland is on the title-page of a book, *Joy and Tears*, published in 1635, where it is introduced with some reference to the troubles of the Kirk. But curiously enough it was Patrick Adamson, one of King James's bishops, who, more than fifty years before that, preached a sermon in which he compared the Church to a burning bush, and the illustration was too striking to be forgotten. It appears again as a frontispiece to a pamphlet printed at London in 1642, and there are frequent allusions to the Burning Bush as the symbol of the suffering Church in Samuel Rutherford's *Letters*. The Covenanting persecutions seem to have graven it deeply

in the experience of the Scottish Kirk, for in 1691 we find it printed for the first time on the title-page of the Acts of the General Assembly. This, however, was not done by any formal resolution of the Assembly adopting the emblem. It was accepted because of its appropriateness, and has appeared ever since on the official documents of the Church of Scotland, and of Churches that owe their origin to her. The credit of bringing the emblem into general use therefore belongs to George Mossman, an Edinburgh printer, appointed by the Assembly to do its work.

The Free Church took over the device and motto from the Established Church at the Disruption in 1843. At the Union in 1900 the Burning Bush was combined with the Dove and Olive leaf, the special emblem of the United Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church of England has also a double device—the Burning Bush and “Nec tamen consumeatur” being blended with an open Bible bearing the words “The Word of the Lord endureth for ever.”

The Irish Presbyterian Church uses the emblem with “Ardens sed virens,” burning but flourishing, as motto. Most of the Presbyterian Churches in the Colonies have adopted the device without any change, but in Australia they use in front of a St. Andrew’s cross a shield with a blue ground and thereon a Southern cross indicated by stars, charged with the Burning Bush, and the motto in a white border.

(See paper by Dr. George Sprott in *Transactions of Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society*, vol. iii., and article in *Scots Magazine*, July 1893, by Rev. James Christie, D.D.)



## CHAPTER II.

### THE EARLY PRESBYTERS.

THE Christian Church has now existed for nearly one thousand nine hundred years, and it is not easy for us to form a true picture of what it was at the beginning. Yet by studying the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of Paul, John, Peter, and others we can learn a good deal, and it is possible to step, as it were, inside one of these early congregations and compare it with a congregation now.

We shall imagine ourselves going back to that far distant time, and entering a church some Sunday evening a few years after Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. For remember that it was the glorious truth that He did not remain in the grave, but rose to new life and then ascended to Heaven, that brought the Christian fellowship into being. The people who believed that Jesus was alive again, and alive for ever, were so full of joy that they could not help coming together to thank God, and the Holy Spirit was given them, so that they were not afraid to tell the world the glad tidings that had changed their own lives. They met in little companies

to pray and praise, to break bread, to hold happy conversation with each other, and to hear once more the wonderful story of the Saviour's love.

To join with them in their worship, we do not make our way to any building in the least like a modern church. While the heathen have their beautiful temples and the Jews their synagogues, the Christians have to meet in rooms of private houses. They have no money as yet to spend on fine buildings, and it would not be safe for them to worship in public places. Poor and despised, they are obliged to hide themselves in quiet refuges, and sometimes in underground chambers called catacombs, intended for the burial of the dead. But there is a light of joy on their faces, for they know that they have gathered to keep tryst with Christ their Lord.

We look for the things to which we are accustomed in our services, but do not see them. No pulpit, no organ, no comfortable pews—just a few rows of benches, women sitting on one side of the room, men on the other, without any place for a minister. Yet there are some who take the lead—starting a psalm or hymn, reading Scripture, or speaking a word in God's name. All present are free to take part. It is more like an open prayer-meeting than the kind of church service we know. And at the close these Christian brothers and sisters sit down to a common meal which ends with the observance of the Lord's Supper.

That is how believers in Jesus worshipped in the first century, and though we feel the difference between the

practice of that time and ours, we should think most of the points of likeness. Theirs was the same faith that the Church has now—in Jesus and the Resurrection—the same prayer to the Father through the Son, the same praise to God for His goodness, the same Old Testament (it was only by degrees that the New Testament came to be read too in the services), the same gospel preached, the same Sacraments observed.

And we find, at least in germ, the same principles of government that we have adopted in the Presbyterian Church. These early Christians were ruled, just as we are, by Presbyters. For that strange word “Presbyter,” Greek in its origin, is the same word we know better as Elder. In every Presbyterian Church to-day there is a body of elders appointed over the congregation. They are called by that name because they are usually men of mature age. It is their duty to visit the people from time to time, and on Communion Sundays they sit beside the minister when the elements of bread and wine are set apart for solemn use, carrying these afterwards from pew to pew. And the minister, though the most prominent, is himself one of the elders or presbyters, better able to teach because he has been educated and trained for that purpose, but ruling along with the rest in what we call the Session. Ministers and elders of the various congregations in a town or district form what is called a Presbytery, and all the Presbyteries in a larger region are combined in a Synod. Still higher than that is the General Assembly.

Now, it was this kind of government in a simpler form that grew up from a very early time in the Christian Church. Perhaps it was copied from the Jews, who had elders in their synagogues. Anyhow, it was well suited for the circumstances of that age, and we cannot but see a divine purpose in it. The elders then, as now, had the oversight of Christ's flock, and they sought to feed both the lambs and the sheep. Each of them was also called by the name of Bishop, a word which means "Overseer," though, as we shall see later, it came to be used of *one* man, singled out above the others. And they had the assistance of another set of office-bearers called Deacons, who attended to such matters as distributing money to the poor members, and were in general the helpers of the elders in the less important work of the Church. We have these deacons still in the Presbyterian Church, but they sometimes have the name of Managers.

The early Presbyters were humble heroes whom we do well to keep in remembrance, for they laid the foundations of our Church life and government. It was no earthly honour they sought. To rule the Church in times of danger and persecution was, indeed, to bear the Cross after Jesus. But this they counted a glory far greater than worldly renown. We cannot tell the names of many of them. One of the finest examples was Timothy, who, knowing the Scriptures from childhood, grew up to be the right-hand man of the great apostle Paul. And Peter, though the leader of the apostles, rejoiced to think of himself as an elder, encouraging his

fellow-elders to be faithful by pointing them to the heavenly reward in prospect : " When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." He had a word, too, for the younger : " Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you, be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility."

We live in a day when youth is apt to despise age and experience, and therefore it is good to bear in mind what we owe to our seniors, what the whole Church owes to the strong and the wise and the good who were her pilots when she set forth on her stormy voyage through the centuries.

The great treasury of information on the early government and ministry of the Church is Principal Lindsay's book, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*. Dr. Horton's *Early Church* (Century Bible Handbooks) presents the main points of fact and controversy in a form that will be readily understood by educated young people. Pictures in fiction of the Early Church are not, as a rule, very reliable. Perhaps the best is Farrar's *Darkness and Dawn*.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

MOST Presbyterian histories begin with the Reformation in the sixteenth century, for it was then that the idea of the government of the Church by presbyters came to life again after being buried for ages. But it is a great mistake to think of the Church as dead all that time. The story of its life during the fifteen centuries between the Apostles and Martin Luther is of remarkable interest, and perhaps I may try some day to tell it in more detail. God was watching over and guiding His people all through that long period, but for His own wise reasons He allowed them, like the children of Israel, to pass through a wilderness in which they learned much, and were prepared for the land of promise that lay ahead. His plans take centuries to fulfil. We, however, are so impatient that we think He ought to accomplish them in a few years. With Him "One day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." He moves in the circle of eternity, while the generations

of men are confined within the narrow circle of time. And there is no more striking proof of this than the history of the Church before the Reformation.

We saw in the previous chapter that in the first century each Christian congregation was governed in a very simple way, by a body of elders, no one prominent above the rest unless the apostles who had founded the Church or the prophets who had some special message to deliver. But this state of things could not continue. Persecution by the State became more and more violent, and sometimes the Christians did not agree very well among themselves. How were they to be defended against their enemies, and who was to decide what was right and true? Paul, Peter, and the other apostles were dead, the prophets who spoke in the Church meetings were not always clear as to the will of God, and the good elders were often sorely puzzled to know what to do. The Churches needed all the strength they could get, and they thought it best to be governed by one man in each place, the ablest and strongest whom they could choose. He still kept the old name of bishop, but he was not now an overseer on the same level with others—he was the chief pastor and ruler. First he took the charge of one congregation, and did not differ much from an ordinary minister of to-day. Then he was appointed to take care of a number of congregations in a city or district. And later, some bishops, especially those of such great cities as Rome, Constantinople, and Alexandria, came to be looked upon as superior to the



rest. The most powerful of these was the Bishop of Rome, because he lived and ruled in the capital of the world, and presided over the Church which boasted of Peter and Paul as its founders. The Bishop of Rome came to have the name of Pope, which is just the same word as Papa and means Father, because he claimed to be the father and guide of all the Churches.

So it happened that in the course of years nearly all the Christian world grew accustomed to pay reverence and obedience to the Pope. The other bishops, and the priests, as the ministers were now called, took their orders from him. The people no longer chose their own pastors, and they were shut out from all direct share in Church work. Under the Pope there was a great army of clerics, including monks who lived apart from the common life of men in order to give themselves entirely to prayer and learning. During the same period a great change took place in worship. The simple sacrament of the Lord's Supper was transformed into the Mass, which was supposed to be a repetition at the altar in the Church of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Homage began to be given to the Virgin Mary and the Saints instead of to God alone. Images and pictures were adored. Christians after death were believed to go to a place of torture called Purgatory, to be purified from their sins before they could enter heaven. The Bible was hidden from most of the people in a language they could not understand, and much of its teaching was quite forgotten.



## THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION 15

That is the dark side, but there was a bright side too. Christianity won the battle over heathen religions, first in the Roman Empire, and afterwards in conflict with the barbarous races of Northern Europe. Another battle was won against those who disturbed the Church with wrong ideas of Christ and the Gospel. In the Apostles' Creed, and in the longer version of it known as the Nicene Creed, are set forth the main doctrines of the Faith that we hold in common with the ancient Church. For notwithstanding all the errors and superstitions that grew up during this time the Truth in its essence was wonderfully preserved. Things were about their worst in the year 1000, when many thought the world was coming to an end, but after that the Church began to revive.

Many of the popes and bishops were earnest and faithful men, and we ought not to think hardly of the priests and monks and nuns who served Christ truly though in ways different from ours. Some of them, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, Francis of Assisi, and Catherine of Siena, were among the very best people that ever lived and are rightly called saints. We can learn much even in this modern time from what they said and did, and we still look with wonder and joy at the cathedrals built in the Middle Ages by pious and skilful hands. We are glad too to study the marvellous visions of the future life that Dante, perhaps the greatest of all Christian poets, gave to the world in the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Then we sing in most of our Churches the grand hymns that were written in the ages before the Reformation—the *Te Deum*, noblest of them all, being about one thousand five hundred years old—and they teach us almost better than anything else how rich and how deep was the piety of long ago. Remember that although there were many corruptions in the Church, Christ was still reigning in the hearts of His disciples, and so they kept trusting and singing all the time.

Champions of pure Gospel Truth like John Wyclif and John Hus set the Word of God above the traditions of men, and defended the rights of the Christian people against the tyranny of popes and prelates. Thus the Church was gradually prepared for the clearer light that was to dawn.

It is safe to say that the later history of the Presbyterian and of all the Protestant Churches grew out of that long but fruitful time of waiting. The Bush was ever burning in the wilderness and men warmed themselves in its glow. It was a real Evangel that came during these days to our ancestors in the wilds of Britain and in the forests of continental Europe. Whether through Patrick of Ireland, Columba of Iona, Aidan of Lindisfarne, or Augustine of Canterbury, it was the message of the Love of Jesus Christ to sinful men that melted the hearts of our forefathers, and won them for a Kingdom that shall know no end.

Canton's *Child's Book of Saints* is just the thing to give young folk an appreciation of the beautiful and permanent elements in

## THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION 17

mediæval Christianity. For Francis of Assisi, see a delightful little book, *The Story of the Glorious Poor Little One, retold in simple words for Children who think*, by Florence Bone (Wesleyan Book-Room). A pleasant introduction to Dante for young people is *How Dante climbed the Mountain*, by Rose E. Selfe (Cassell).

There are few better pictures of Europe on the eve of the Reformation than Charles Reade's *Cloister and the Hearth*. Earlier periods are dealt with in Newman's *Callista* (third century), Kingsley's *Hypatia* (fifth century), and Mrs. Charles's *Diary of Brother Bartholomew* (twelfth century).

## CHAPTER IV.

### JOHN CALVIN AND GENEVA.

**B**EFORE we go on to tell how the Presbyterian system came to life again through the person of John Calvin in the beautiful city of Geneva, we must do honour to the name of Martin Luther. It is impossible to think of the Reformation without him. You must read for yourselves the thrilling story of his life, how this bold monk gave the signal for the great revolt from Rome, and brought men back to the Bible as the Rule of Faith. If we were writing the history of the Protestant Church as a whole, we should have to say much about Luther, whose words were "half-battles" and whose deeds were rousing trumpet-calls. But while the German reformer was the foremost champion of the truth that set Christian people free, he did not build up a form of Church government that has stood the test of time and found favour in all lands. He approved of Presbyterianism in theory, but was not able to put it into practice. This task was reserved for John Calvin.

I do not trouble you with many dates, but will you

try to remember 10th July 1509? On that day, in the town of Noyon, in Picardy, nearly sixty miles from Paris, Calvin was born. Exactly four hundred years later a vast crowd of people gathered in the cathedral of Geneva to celebrate the event. Representatives from England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, America, Germany, Hungary, Holland, France, Italy, and Scandinavia all joined with Switzerland in thanking God for Calvin's life and work, and took part in a Communion service in the great church where he preached. It was a scene to be remembered, and it vividly brought to mind all that the world, and not merely the Presbyterian Church, owes to this man of whom we have now to speak.

Noyon is a quaint old city that Robert Louis Stevenson describes in his *Inland Voyage*. He goes into raptures over the lovely cathedral that still stands there very much as it did in the days of Calvin. For—think of it—when only twelve years old he was appointed a chaplain in that cathedral, and he held that office till he was twenty-five, drawing a salary from this and another church in the town that paid the cost of his education in Paris and elsewhere. That was the custom of the time, and John Calvin's father, being a man of influence in Noyon, thought he was doing an excellent thing for his son when he got the Church to pay in this peculiar way for the expense of his upbringing.

But after the young man grew up and began to think for himself, he saw the absurdity of taking money from the Church for work that he never did. By this time

Luther had sounded his battlecry against the errors of Rome, and that cry awoke an echo in Calvin's heart. He, too, resolved to be a warrior for the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ. We do not know how he came to the knowledge of the truth, but he was accused of heresy, and imprisoned for a short time in his native town. Afterwards he wandered about in a good many parts of France. That country, however, was no safe home for a Protestant, and he made his way to the Swiss city of Basel. There in 1536 he published a great book, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, a wonderful achievement for one who was only twenty-seven years of age. Then we find him travelling for a while in Italy, and, after crossing the Alps, arriving in Geneva on a July night, not intending to stay there longer than till the following morning. But God had designed that city to be his home and the scene of his life-work, and in Geneva, with the exception of a brief time when he had to flee from his enemies, he remained up to the hour of his death.

I would like you to have a picture in your minds of this town that has made some of the grandest history in the annals of mankind. It is on the borders of Switzerland and France, just where the Rhone, with its deep blue waters and rapid current, bursts forth from the glittering expanse of Lake Lemman. On the left bank rises the old city where Calvin lived and laboured, with the ancient cathedral of St. Peter towering above its streets and roofs. On the right bank is

the quarter that used to be inhabited by the working classes, but which is now the principal resort of visitors. Handsome bridges connect the two sides, and as you look over the lake and away to the hill country beyond, you often see the majestic snowy range of Mont Blanc, more than fifty miles distant.

Besides the church where Calvin was the chief minister, you can see the house where he resided, the academy that he founded, and the cemetery where he lies buried. A monument is being reared over against one of the old ramparts in memory of Calvin and the other reformers, with the suitable motto, "Post tenebras lux" (After Darkness, Light). But the most lasting memorial of Calvin is the work he did, not for Geneva only, for the world at large. He, more than any other, was the maker of the modern Presbyterian Church, and his example and influence have made all the Churches his debtors.

Let us see how this was. Geneva at that time needed a strong man to rule over it. It was a wicked place, and no one could control the manners of its people. Calvin was not strong in body. He was slender and spare in form, with the habits of a scholar; he scarcely ever knew what it was to enjoy good health, and headaches continually troubled him. Yet this pale, weak man was more than a match for the rough, rude folk of Geneva, because he had in extraordinary degree that force of character which is really the strongest thing in the world. So he was able to put down drunkenness



and gambling and all kinds of bad living. The town was quite transformed. "Geneva became the garden of the Lord, where blood-red roses grew."

Calvin had the special gift of order and reasoning that belongs to Frenchmen. He saw that Geneva needed a new Church, organised according to the best methods, and he sought to build up one on Scriptural lines that would be a model to the rest of the world. So he was led to go back to the days of the early Presbyters and to refashion the Church after that old pattern, keeping in view the changed conditions of the times. Therefore, five years after he came to Geneva he got the people to agree to his plan by which pastors and teachers, elders and deacons, were again chosen as the office-bearers of the Church of Christ. He did away with priests and put presbyters in their place. (He also established Church courts, which were the beginnings of our Presbyterian Synods and Assemblies.) In his *Institutes* he had already given an outline of the Reformed Creed, based upon the truth of God's Sovereignty over all.

Thus it came about that in the terrible fight then going on between Roman Catholics and Protestants, Geneva was regarded as a place of refuge to which all could come who were persecuted for conscience' sake. France was under the rule of a bigoted king, England and Scotland were still struggling towards the Light, Germany was torn by internal conflict, Italy and other lands were held in bondage to the Pope in spiritual matters. If you look at the map you will see how



centrally situated Geneva is for all countries. So for many years it was the best school of Protestantism in Europe, and Calvin the best teacher. In the first year of the new Academy's existence 800 students of different nations were enrolled.

Calvin was above all else a student of the Word of God. It was that which chiefly drew people to him, and it is that which mostly keeps his name alive to-day. Some of his thoughts about religion we may think stern and hard, and certain of the rules he made for Geneva were too strict to be always observed. He made a great mistake in allowing one Michael Servetus to be put to death because of the wrong opinions he held on some important points of doctrine. We have learned now that truth may safely be left to take care of itself, and that it is a sin to persecute those who think differently from us. But Calvin knew the Bible better than any man of that age, and even now there are few equal to him in thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. One of the keystones of Presbyterianism is attachment to the Bible as our guide into all truth, and this stone was fitted firmly into its fabric by the reformer of Geneva.

He worked so hard that his life was short in earthly years. When we remember that he gave on an average more than five sermons and three lectures a week, that he conducted an immense correspondence, wrote innumerable books, and was active in countless other ways, we cannot be surprised that he died when only fifty-four.

All this makes Calvin one of the most splendid examples of the strenuous life that the world has ever seen. We may not love this man with the small face and finely-cut features so much as the big, warm-hearted Luther, but we admire him as "the most Christian man of his generation," who did as much as any one to save Europe in her hour of need.

Geneva ought to be remembered by us gratefully for at least two other things. It gave birth in Calvin's century to one of the best translations of the Bible into English, and to our much-loved Presbyterian psalmody. The Geneva Bible was the first printed in Scotland, and the version most used in England till King James's version was published in 1611. Then as the people began to sing the Psalms in their own tongue, they wanted good tunes, and there were musicians in Geneva who knew well how to provide these. So the grand tunes we call Old 100th, Old 124th, and others about as fine were composed and first sung in those days. They are among the most precious relics of the Reformation time, and it would be a great pity indeed if Presbyterians ever forgot or ceased to use them.

Theodore Beza, who succeeded Calvin as chief pastor of Geneva, was a great lover of the Bible and the Psalms. It was in his time (1602) that the Dukes of Savoy tried to capture the city from the Protestants. They devised a plot, by means of ladders planted against the walls on a very dark night, to get their army into the town. Their attempt, known as the Escalade, would

have succeeded but for the bravery of the citizens—women as well as men. One valiant dame threw a huge iron pot on the head of a Savoyard soldier, striking terror into the rest, while another barricaded the door of her room with an enormous chest, and flung out of the window a key that enabled the Genevese to enter by a gateway and repulse the enemy. It was a heroic defence, due to the courage that Calvin and Beza infused into the souls of the common people.

In the chapters that follow we shall see how the fire kindled at Geneva spread over all the earth.

The most popular and in every way the best life of Luther for young people is still Mrs. Rundle Charles's *Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family*, now out of copyright and to be bought for one shilling. An excellent work is Principal Lindsay's *Luther*, in "The World's Epoch-Makers" Series (T. & T. Clark). For the life of Calvin, see two good monographs—by Professor Williston Walker of Yale ("Heroes of the Reformation" Series) and by Rev. C. H. Irwin (London Religious Tract Society)—both well illustrated. Stanley Weyman's *Long Night* gives a most graphic account of the Escalade of 1602. See also Deborah Alcock's story, *Under Calvin's Spell*.

Escalade

## CHAPTER V.

### COLIGNY AND THE HUGUENOTS.

CALVIN was a Frenchman, and France was really among the very first lands to receive Reformation light. In 1512, five years before Luther sounded his trumpet blast, Lefèvre, a professor in Paris, published a commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, in which he set forth clearly what was afterwards proclaimed in Germany. "It is God Who gives us by faith that righteousness which, by grace alone, justifies to eternal life." He also published a translation of the New Testament into French which the people bought and read eagerly. The king—Francis I.—showed at first some favour towards the new movement, and his sister, Margaret of Valois, became a convert to it. We have seen that young Calvin was early won over to the evangelical faith. No wonder the priests got alarmed, and so wrought on the mind of the king that he turned against the Protestants and began to persecute them. Calvin and others had to flee the country, for heresy was made a crime punishable with death.

Yet the Word spread. Notwithstanding imprisonment and the scaffold, massacre and the stake, the reformed

faith made steady progress. It is reckoned that by about 1550 from a sixth to a fourth of the French people had given up Romanism. From Geneva Calvin passed on the torch of truth that he could no longer kindle on his native soil. But as yet there was no organised Protestant Church, only Bible students gathering together in secret, and bands of worshippers meeting when they could in private houses. On a September evening in 1555 one of these bands had assembled in a family home in Paris. There was a little child to baptize, but no minister to baptize it nearer than Geneva, which was more than three hundred miles away. The father would not, "for conscience' sake," have a priest to perform the rite, and he implored the worshippers to form themselves into a Church and choose a pastor who could administer the Sacraments. They agreed to take this bold step, and called as minister a young man who had been trained at Geneva. Elders and deacons were also chosen, and thus the first congregation of the Presbyterian Church was formed in France. Others quickly followed, so that in four years it was possible to hold a National Synod in Paris. This brought all the ministers, elders, and deacons together in one body, professing one faith, and a Church grew up on the Presbyterian plan more complete than that of Geneva, because France was a large country and needed to be more thoroughly organised. By 1561 the number of congregations was 2160. That is the highest figure the French Protestants ever reached.

Truly has this Church been called "The Church under the Cross." It had two emblems—the Burning Bush, of which we have written in our first chapter, and the Anvil, smitten again and again, wearing out many hammers, yet never destroyed, made only the harder for the many strokes upon it. The Protestants bound themselves by a solemn oath to stand by each other, and so came to be known as Huguenots, a kind of nickname which came to mean "comrades of the oath."<sup>1</sup> For they had indeed to be very loyal fellow-soldiers in the great fight that lay before them.

God gave to them a noble leader in the person of Gaspard de Coligny. He was of high birth, the son of one of the Marshals of France, who died when he was five years old, and he was brought up in the famous Castle of Chatillon. His mother sympathised with the Reformation movement, and gave him as tutor one of the best scholars of the time. Then when he was old enough he went forth to fight the battles of his country against Spain. A very brave soldier he was, not afraid to take his stand with only a few hundred men against tens of thousands on the other side. He was imprisoned once by the Spaniards for a year and a half, but "found freedom—the freedom of conscience and the soul—when caged within stone walls and iron bars." He came out a Huguenot, and from that day till his death was the dauntless champion of his oppressed comrades.

The Huguenots were now strong enough to claim

<sup>1</sup> German—"Eidgenossen."

liberty of faith and worship. But the Roman Catholics were just as determined to put them down, and to compel everybody to believe and to pray according to the Pope's way. So a terrible civil war was begun which made France run with human blood. Coligny took up arms unwillingly, but there was no help for it. Just at this time trials came thick upon him. His wife fell a victim to the plague, one brother was exiled and another died, he had to suffer two defeats in battle, and his splendid castle was plundered and destroyed. "Men have taken from us all they can," he wrote to his boys. "If such is always the will of God, we shall be happy." He thus earned for himself the name of "the hero of bad fortune," surely the very noblest kind of hero, for it is far easier to be brave when everything goes well with us. And now he was to crown his career by laying down his life for his friends and for his great captain, Christ.

One of the most disgraceful deeds in history was the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, on the 24th August 1572. During a time of truce, when it seemed as if the Huguenots were in a fair way towards gaining their liberties, their enemies resolved treacherously to destroy them. Coligny and the flower of the Protestant chivalry were lured within the walls of Paris to join in celebrating the wedding of the King's sister to the young King of Navarre. At a signal given—the tolling of the great bell of one of the churches—armed men came out of their hiding-places and commenced the horrid work of butchery. They found Coligny in his chamber. "I have



long been prepared to die," he said. "I commend my soul to the mercy of God." So he was done to death with thousands more, while in the slaughter that followed all over France from 50,000 to 70,000 Huguenots fell. And the Pope in Rome had actually a medal struck and thanksgivings offered to the Most High for this wholesale murder!

Not then, however, was the Reformation struggle in France ended. It only entered on a new phase. Coligny did not die in vain. The war went on, and sixteen years later, Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Protestants, came to the throne. To make his crown safe and to gain over his most bitter foes, he became a Roman Catholic. He could not withal forget his old friends, and in 1598 he published the Edict of Nantes, granting liberty of conscience to all. If only France had been wise enough to keep this good law on her statute-book she would be a better and more religious country to-day. Unhappily, after Henry's death other kings and statesmen arose who hated the Protestants, and eventually Louis XIV. in 1685 revoked the Edict. The Reformed worship was declared illegal, Protestant churches were ordered to be destroyed, ministers required to leave the country, and every possible step taken to crush the Huguenots.

It seemed as if the Presbyterian Church of France, so promising in its beginnings, were now to pass out of existence. Many of King Louis's best subjects found a refuge in our own and other lands, and there meets still



in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral a congregation of their descendants worshipping regularly according to the Huguenot rites.

But after a hundred years signs of revival appeared in the south of France. The sorely tried remnant had not perished, and the wave of liberty that passed over the land in the days of the Revolution brought back to them their civil rights and their freedom of worship. Napoleon gave the Protestants a constitution, and they were not only recognised by the State—they received money for the support of their ministry. By that time they had dwindled to a little over one hundred congregations. This new connection with the State tended to fetter the Church in many ways, and in 1848 some of the most earnest pastors and people separated from the rest and formed a Free Church, which continues to do a good work in spreading the Gospel in France. But this meant that the Protestants of France were divided as well as weak.

Now all this has been a very sad story, and I am glad to be able to end it on a more hopeful note. The Church of the Anvil has not yet been hammered into its final shape, but it is not likely to be broken again by persecution. It has at present over 700 congregations scattered throughout the land, grouped in 180 Presbyteries and including at least 400,000 members and adherents. A Church is not to be considered great simply because of its numbers. Far more important is its witness for the truth, and no Church has been

more faithful to the motto of the Burning Bush than this, tried as it has been by the fiercest fires and still unconsumed. Bersier, one of its most distinguished ministers, said in 1888: "I represent a great Presbyterian Church—I may say the greatest, when I think of what she has suffered for the cause of Christ and human liberty. And though we are small now, we may say that our poverty has been the riches of many nations."

The French people have now very largely given up the Roman Catholic faith. In 1905 they disestablished the Church—both Romish and Protestant—so that the State now regards all Christian congregations as nothing more than associations registered for public worship. Unfortunately the rulers of France have slight sympathy with religion of any kind, and the people are like sheep without a shepherd, falling too easy a prey to the wolves of unbelief. Yet signs are not wanting that better days are coming. Many priests have been turning towards Protestantism. There is a yearning for freedom within the Roman Catholic fold. The disunited elements of the old National Presbyterian Church are drawing together again. It is now free to carry on its work without any control by the State. With so grand a history, it cannot but look forward to a brighter future. "The White Fields of France" will some day yield a rich harvest for the Gospel. The *entente cordiale* that binds Great Britain to her neighbour across the Channel may yet, and let us pray soon, be completed by a happy harmony in the faith and service of Jesus Christ.

The article "Huguenots" in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* is by Frank Puaux, president of the French Protestant Historical Society, and it gives in small compass the latest and most accurate information on the subject. There are good biographies of Coligny by Walter Besant and A. W. Whitehead. Of historical tales may be mentioned, *For the Religion*, and *A Man of His Age*, by Hamilton Drummond, illustrating Coligny; Stanley Weyman's *House of the Wolf* (Massacre of St. Bartholomew), Crockett's *White Plumes of Navarre* (Huguenot Wars), and Conan Doyle's *Refugees* (Revocation of the Edict of Nantes).

## CHAPTER VI.

### WILLIAM OF ORANGE AND THE DUTCH HEROES.

**H**OLLAND is a very small country compared with France, but it has been the scene of some of the most thrilling deeds in Presbyterian history, and to-day we honour it as one of the earliest homes of liberty. A land of green meadows, edged by high dykes or embankments to keep out the invading sea, and drained by windmills that lift the water into innumerable canals, it is inhabited by sturdy folk who have learned how to defend themselves against the forces of nature and the tyranny of man. It used to be joined to what is now known as Belgium, and the whole of the low-lying country bordering on the North Sea between France and Germany was called the Netherlands.

The ruler of this region in the days of the Reformation was the Emperor Charles v., who was both lord of Germany and king of Spain—of all monarchs of that time the most dreaded. Before him Martin Luther stood accused at the Diet of Worms; and it is a wonder that

he did not have him arrested and put to death, for Charles was a strong supporter of the old Roman Catholic religion, and had no patience with the people who wanted to reform it. But he had more power in the Netherlands than he had in Germany, and in the year 1523 two monks were burnt at Antwerp for spreading Luther's doctrines. "As they were led to the stake they cried with a loud voice that they were Christians: and when they were fastened to it and the fire was kindled they rehearsed the twelve articles of the Creed, and after that the *Te Deum*, which each of them sang verse by verse alternately until the flames deprived them of both voice and life."

Does it not stir the heart's blood to read of such courage? Such was the stuff of which the Netherlands were made, and therefore we are not surprised that this was the beginning of a splendid and successful struggle for the truth. When I was a boy of twelve, a school prize was awarded me which I still count among my treasures. It was a copy of Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, and I date from the time when I first read that fascinating history—more so than any novel, because actually true—my interest in William of Orange and the Dutch heroes. What I say about them here will, I hope, lead you on to the study of that famous book, and fill you with enthusiasm for the noble cause on whose behalf these martyrs bled.

From Luther on the one side and from Calvin on the other the message of the Reformation came to the

Netherlands; but Calvin's influence turned out to be the greater. These people had to fight for their freedom just as strenuously as the Huguenots, and the strong teaching of the Genevan leader seemed to give them the bone and the sinew that were specially needed for stern conflict. The Low Countries have been called the "cockpit of Europe," because so much fighting has been done on their soil, and the armies of the Continent and of Great Britain have found it convenient to meet there in order to test each other's strength. Of many such battles the last and greatest was Waterloo, in 1815.

For nearly a hundred years the rest of Europe looked with interest at the contest going on in the Netherlands between the power of Rome and the power of the new faith. When Charles v. died and was succeeded by his son, Philip II., the struggle became yet more terrible, for Philip was a cruel and gloomy bigot, who hated Protestants with a deadly hatred. He wrote to the Pope: "I would lose all my States and a hundred lives if I had them, rather than be the lord of heretics." And when we remember that he governed the greater part of the New World as well as much of the Old, that he hoped by his Armada to conquer even England, and that his wealth in men and money was almost beyond reckoning, it is surely one of the miracles of history that the little land of Holland was able to baffle him.

William of Orange was the hero raised up by Providence to beat the Spanish tyrant. He belonged to the family of Nassau, and fell heir to great estates in

Germany, France, and the Netherlands. When a lad he became the favourite page of the Emperor Charles v., and at nineteen began to serve his military apprenticeship. Like Coligny, he showed his prowess as a soldier before he distinguished himself as a patriotic reformer. When only twenty-one he was promoted to the command of an army of 20,000 men. Though brought up as a Roman Catholic, he soon came to believe in freedom of conscience and the right of public worship for men of all creeds; and from this it was but a short step to the adoption of the Protestant faith. For only the Protestants dared to preach such freedom, and he saw that the kings of Spain and France were determined to drive out heresy by fire and sword from their dominions. His whole soul revolted against this policy, and he showed clearly that he was with the States-General of the Netherlands in their desire that the Spanish troops should be withdrawn from their territory, and no one forced to profess a religion that he did not believe. Philip II. was very angry, and, when William defended himself by pleading the action of the States, the enraged monarch shouted at him: "No, not the States, but you—you—you!" He was not far wrong; for William, by his quiet strength and wise counsel, was breathing a new spirit into the oppressed people that was to prove more than a match for the proud king.

By this time the persecuted Protestants were beginning to organise. The southern provinces were the first to adopt a Presbyterian creed and constitution, though it



was in the north that these ideas obtained deepest root. Outbreaks of a violent kind took place, churches were sacked, images destroyed, and crowds of men, women, and children came together to hear the Protestant preachers. Full of fury, Philip sent down the ruthless Duke of Alva to put an end, if possible, to the rebellion. "I have tamed men of iron," said the Duke; "I shall know how to deal with men of butter." His policy was to give no quarter to any suspected persons. In three months 1800 Protestants were condemned to the scaffold. To strike terror into the minds of all opponents of the government, Egmont and Horn, eminent nobles who had taken a leading part on the popular side, though they still adhered to the old faith, were executed at Brussels. The newly formed Church organisation was broken up, and Alva boasted of the apparent completeness of his success. "Thank God," he wrote to Philip, "all is quiet in the country." But the men of butter turned out in the end to be men of iron, and William of Orange now stepped forth as their champion. He was declared an outlaw, but the nation hailed him as their Divinely appointed deliverer.

He had great difficulties to face, and his first campaign was a failure. Still he persevered, and the resistance to Alva became more and more dogged. The Dutchmen discovered new weapons with which to fight, and the most potent proved to be their mastery of the sea. "The Sea-Beggars," as they were contemptuously called, laid the foundations of that sea-power which was des-

tined ere long to cover the ocean with its fleets and plant its colours on many a continent. Their bold capture of the town of Brill was a turning-point in the war, for the Spaniards then found it was not enough for them to be masters on land. Alva returned to Spain, and the year after (1573) saw the wonderful deliverance of the city of Leyden. It stood in a plain full of fruitful gardens and harvest fields, but being below the sea-level it could be flooded if the dykes that kept out the waves were cut. This was done, and the fleet of the Sea Beggars sailed up to the walls of the city, bringing relief to the famished people and putting the Spanish army to flight. From this time onward victory inclined more and more to the side of Freedom. Orange was honoured as the father of his country. The Dutch Republic was founded in 1581 with him as its first governor. While Spain recovered lost ground in the south, Holland waxed strong in her independence. The only hope of Philip now was to bring about the death of his successful rival. He offered a reward of 25,000 golden crowns with a patent of nobility and a pardon for all past offences to any one who would assassinate the Prince of Orange. Several made the attempt in vain, but unhappily one "poor, wretched-looking piece of humanity" succeeded on 12th July 1584. It was in the town of Delft, famed for its cleanliness and its crockery, and I have seen the spot near the foot of a staircase, preserved in the same state ever since, where the fatal pistol was fired, the wall still bearing the mark of the shot.

William the Silent, as this calm, deep-thinking man was called, thus gave his life for the cause of civil and religious liberty, and took his place among the martyred heroes of the nations. It is interesting to note that only a year before his death he married Coligny's daughter, a noble woman who survived him fifty years, and that their great-grandson became William III., king of Great Britain and Ireland. Among the descendants of this marriage living in 1913 are to be reckoned the Emperor of Germany, the Emperor of Austria, the Czar of Russia, and Queen Mary of England.

Holland was more fortunate than France in having men to take up the work of the lost leader. The princes of the House of Orange proved worthy of their great ancestor, and the struggle continued till all the northern part of the Netherlands was finally freed from Spanish dominion. The Church, too, was firmly reorganised on Presbyterian lines, and a Calvinistic Confession of Faith adopted. In two things the Dutch Church differed from other Presbyterian Churches. All the members living in a city were regarded as one congregation, and therefore there was but one kirk-session, or consistory, for the whole place. Then, owing to the constitution of the country being a federation of States, in some respects independent of each other, it was not easy for a national Synod to be held, so the Church seldom came together as one body.

But the little Church grew and flourished. It gained renown for its learning, and scholars flocked from all

parts of Europe to study at the University of Leyden that had been founded in memory of the relief of the city. The Dutch were very clever at arguing, and some of their leading men, notably Arminius and Grotius, were not disposed to accept everything that John Calvin had laid down. They were outvoted at a memorable Synod, held at Dort in 1618, and this led to a split between Calvinists and Arminians that made considerable stir for a time. Then in the days when the Puritans and Covenanters were sorely persecuted in England and Scotland, their ministers found a refuge in Holland, where they were able to gather much learning which they afterwards used to good purpose. Leyden became almost like Geneva—a home for oppressed Protestants in exile.

There are now in Holland two important Presbyterian Churches—the National Church, which is endowed by the State, and the Reformed, which first broke off from it in 1837. The National Church numbers 1350 congregations. The other is smaller, but holds more firmly by the doctrines of Calvin. If you visited Holland you would be struck by the bareness and ugliness of most of the churches. The reason of that is that the people in their long struggle against the Church of Rome with its gorgeous rites and ceremonies got to have such a hatred of all formality that they made their buildings for worship as plain as possible, often covering up fine old architecture with whitewash and plaster, and removing every ornament. The move-

ment for making Protestant churches beautiful and seemly, which has made such progress in other lands, has not had much effect in Holland. But they have very large and powerful organs, one in Haarlem with 5000 pipes being reckoned among the biggest instruments in the world.

Belgium, which once formed part of the Netherlands, is now a separate kingdom, and the inhabitants are mostly Roman Catholic. There is, however, a Presbyterian remnant that keeps the light shining, consisting of two bodies, one known as the Union of the Evangelical Churches in Belgium, the other more active, as the Christian Missionary Church. Its mission is chiefly to the working people in the great industrial districts of the country. While the wealthy and prosperous Dutch Church is well able to look after itself, the Belgian is very much dependent on help given by the strong Presbyterian Churches of our own and other lands.

Motley's *Dutch Republic*, with its continuation, *History of the United Netherlands*, must be read for a full view of the history. There are good recent biographies of William the Silent by Ruth Putnam and J. C. Squire. Some first-rate historical novels depict the golden age of Dutch independence—*Lysbeth*, by Rider Haggard; *The Beggars of the Sea*, by Tom Bevan (Nelson); *In Troubled Times*, by A. S. C. Wallis (Sonnenschein); *By Pike and Dyke*, by G. A. Henty; and *The Burgomaster's Wife*, by George Ebers.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ISRAEL OF THE ALPS.

**I**N the north-west of Italy, surrounded on all sides but one by the high ranges of the Alps, lies the province of Piedmont, and in a corner of it are several valleys with beautiful names. Rora, for instance, is the valley of dew : Pomaretto, of apples : Perosa, of flowers : Luserna, of light : Angrogna, of groans—not the groans of the inhabitants but of the waters as they rush over their rocky bed. There you will find to-day the home of a vigorous Presbyterian Church, and will be welcomed by a people who, though they speak a foreign tongue, are in many ways very like ourselves. These are the Waldenses, sometimes called the Israel of the Alps, because they resemble God's chosen people of old, preserving a pure faith and worship in the security of their mountain ramparts. You wonder why they have thus survived in the very country of the Pope notwithstanding persecution continued through many centuries, and the story is indeed one of the romances of history.

For the beginning of it we must go back to about

the year 1170, and to the fine old city of Lyons in France, standing now as then at the confluence of the two great rivers Rhone and Saône, and not so far from the Alps but you can see them in the distance on a clear day. There was a rich merchant in Lyons named Peter Waldo who desired to follow the perfect way of life, and was told of Christ's counsel to the rich young man—"If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." He sold his goods, believing it to be the Lord's will, set himself to study the Gospels, and got together a band of men who with sandals on their feet, and robed in a peculiar dress, went everywhere preaching to the poor.

They were known as the "Poor Men of Lyons," but as they taught that all believers were priests, and that the Sacraments were useless when administered by bad men, the Pope and the clergy bitterly opposed their work, and commenced to persecute them. So they had to find refuge in quiet places, and we find them from the thirteenth century onwards in the retired valleys of the Alps, where they were joined by some reformers from Italy who had also to flee from the Papal power.

We are not to think of them as at first a Protestant, much less a Presbyterian Church. They just wanted to be let alone to live a simple Christlike life, to read the Bible, and to preach the Truth as they had learned it. Now they came to be known as Waldenses or Vaudois, after Waldo their founder. The Popes and the



Dukes of Savoy did their utmost by crusades innumerable to crush them out of existence. But it was all in vain. The valleys became more and more sacred to them as the home of their faith. By their sufferings and their training in spiritual independence they were made ripe at last for revolt from Rome altogether.

They got into touch with the movement in Bohemia, of which we shall speak in the next chapter, but the date which marks their start as a Protestant Presbyterian Church was 1532, when they resolved to cast in their lot with Calvin and the Swiss reformers. Very soon they had a baptism in blood. Piedmont fell under the rule of the French kings, and Francis I. ordered the extermination of the Vaudois on both sides of the Alps. He succeeded too well with these in Provence, where there was a considerable colony, but in Piedmont he quite failed. So did the Duke of Savoy, who, after he got back his dominions, wanted to drive all Protestants out of the valleys. The Waldenses defended themselves so bravely that the Duke was obliged to make peace with them, allowing freedom of worship to a limited extent.

For nearly a hundred years they enjoyed comparative quiet, broken only by a terrible visitation of the plague, carrying off one-half of the entire population. But the threat of renewed persecution was always present, and it burst out again in 1655 with more dreadful violence than ever. Of the massacre that year an eye-witness and chief sufferer writes: "All the echoes of the valleys

and of the Alps made such piteous response to the lamentable cries of these poor victims, and to the frightful shrieks raised by so great a company of martyrs, that you would have said that the rocks could hear and had pity at the cries for mercy and the beatings of the breast, while these murderers were utterly unmoved thereat."

But as in the days of the Judges in Israel, God raised up a mighty man of valour for the defence of the persecuted folk. The exploits of Janavel remind us of those of Gideon, for he accomplished wonders with a small band of heroes against the trained warriors of Savoy. The real deliverer, however, of the Waldenses at this time was Oliver Cromwell, the strong man who then ruled over Great Britain. Through his famous secretary, John Milton, he dictated a letter of protest to Louis XIV. of France who was mainly responsible for the massacre, and he sent an ambassador to the court of Savoy to demand the abrogation of the cruel edict. He did even more, for he proclaimed a fast in England and ordered a collection, which amounted to £38,000, to be made for the sufferers. And Milton wrote a sonnet, beginning—

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,

which we cherish among the glories of our literature.

The result was peace once more, and the Waldenses were unmolested till 1686. A Roman Catholic was now on the throne of Britain, and Duke Amadeus II., without

any protest from him, established a new reign of terror in the valleys, offering the Protestant inhabitants the choice between abjuring their faith, and submitting to exile or death. Rather than yield, nearly three thousand of them braved a journey in the icy cold of mid-winter across the Alps to friendly Geneva. For three years they remained in exile till Henri Arnaud, a dauntless pastor, led a band of eight hundred back to his native valleys despite the dangers of the route, made infinitely greater by the determined attempts of the Savoyard troops to resist their progress at every possible point. This was "The Glorious Return," the 200th anniversary of which the Waldenses commemorated with great rejoicings in the summer of 1889. I was one of those favoured to be present on that happy occasion. Delegates from all the leading Presbyterian Churches of the world came to the valleys to share in the glad celebration. A company of stalwart Waldensian youths set out from the Lake of Geneva to traverse the same route as their forefathers two centuries before. They covered the ground very nimbly and quickly and we met them at the fortress-hill of the Balsille, the Thermopylæ of Waldensian history, the spot where a few patriots baffled the mighty power of their foes.

For there, after their perilous journey, Arnaud and his followers entrenched themselves. A huge army encompassed them round, and deliverance seemed impossible. But a thick mist—God's mantle—came down and plunged all in darkness, enabling the Waldenses to escape from

certain destruction. That memorable event really marked the end of the persecuting period. The Duke of Savoy now needed the help of the heroic Vaudois against France, and he restored them their lands and houses with liberty of faith and worship on condition of their renewed loyalty and service.

It was a long time, however, before they got full freedom. They had much petty opposition and ill-treatment to endure till, in 1848, Charles Albert granted them a complete edict of emancipation.

Thenceforth they were free, not only to worship in their beloved valleys, none daring to make them afraid, but to live on equal terms with the other people of the country, and to extend their faith beyond their own borders. As Italy became united under the sovereignty of the House of Savoy, and the Pope lost bit by bit his temporal power, the Waldenses were encouraged to undertake mission work in the beautiful regions farther south, and to-day they have a strong footing in Milan, Florence, Rome, and even Sicily.

The Presbyterian Church is well represented in fair Italy by this brave historic race. They still cling to the valleys where they fought so grand and successful a fight for freedom of faith. There they have 18 parishes, 23 pastors, and some 14,000 members. In Torre Pellice, their capital, a fine Synod House—the *Maison Vaudoise*—was opened in 1889, and in it the Church holds her annual gathering. In Italy, apart from the valleys of Piedmont, they have 44 churches, 38 pastors, and about

4300 members. It is a little flock compared with the great multitude adhering to the Roman Catholic Church, but we remember what Jesus said to His disciples: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." The Waldenses have already won a noble kingdom of their own by their splendid witness-bearing for the truth. Few spots in Europe present holier ground to the Presbyterian pilgrim than these valleys of the Alps where they held fast the living Word, and let no man take their crown.

You will now be able to understand the motto of the Waldensian Church—"Lux lucet in tenebris" (The Light shineth in Darkness). It is just part of the truth that our whole story illustrates—Burning but not consumed.

The older histories of the Waldenses, which seek to trace their evangelical witness right down from the days of the Apostles, have been somewhat discredited by recent research. Professor Comba's *History of the Waldenses of Italy from their Origin to the Reformation* gives the real facts. There is an admirable penny illustrated booklet, *The Waldenses: their Home and their History*, by Rev. James Gibson, D.D. (Edinburgh: Religious Tract and Book Society of Scotland), which is full of accurate information. Worsfold's *Valley of Light* (Macmillan, 1899) is an interesting product of pen and pencil. *In His Name*, by E. Everett Hale, has as its heroine a daughter of a weaver of Lyons of the kindred of Peter Waldo.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE CHURCH OF THE BOOK AND THE CUP.

BOHEMIA is one of the least known countries of Europe. Even the great Shakespeare was rather confused about its geography, for in *The Winter's Tale* he gave it a seacoast, whereas it is far inland, the most northerly part of the Austrian Empire, in the very centre of the Continent. Famous of old, it has much to attract to-day—a wonderful capital city, a people intensely patriotic, highly skilled in the arts, and clinging tenaciously to their ancient language. But what it concerns us most to know here is that it was the cradle of a Protestant movement long before the days of Luther and Calvin. For though the Church of the United Brethren, as it was called, perished in the terrible Thirty Years War, it had a resurrection later on in two Churches that are still living and flourishing—the Moravian, and the Bohemian Reformed.

John Wyclif, the “morning star of the Reformation,” who shone out for a while in England in the fourteenth

century, was really the man that passed on the torch of truth to Bohemia. His writings against the abuses of the Roman Church found their way somehow across sea and land, and were eagerly read by John Hus. That good man began to teach and to preach the doctrines of Wyclif in the city of Prague, and the people were deeply stirred. There was the usual opposition by those who loved the darkness rather than the light. Hus was accused of heresy, and summoned to appear for trial at the great Council of Constance in 1415.

Though he had been promised a safe-conduct there and back, the promise was shamefully broken on the ground that no faith was to be kept with heretics, and he was condemned to death. A monument outside the town marks the place where Hus and afterwards his friend Jerome of Prague were burned at the stake. Both had paper crowns with pictures of devils fastened on their heads, yet with their last breath they chanted the Christian creed, joyfully committing their souls to God.

A mighty flame of anger was kindled in Bohemia, where Hus was loved as a true patriot and honoured as a religious reformer. After much fighting there arose a strong Protestant Church, which for nearly two centuries shed light over the land. Its favourite emblem was the Wine Cup of the Lord's Supper, which the Pope denied to everybody except the priests. The Bohemians, loyal to the teaching of Hus, demanded that the Cup be given to all Christians. We find elders



and deacons in this "Unity of the Brothers," a beautiful name for a Church, and though the chief office-bearer in each district was known as a bishop, these bishops were just superintendents who did not seek to be "lords over God's heritage." As such they were quite in harmony with Presbyterian principles, and the same idea was adopted in Scotland for a while by John Knox. In the golden age of Bohemian Protestantism, the Bible was translated into the native (Czech) language, and there was great delight in hymn-singing. But alas! in 1620, at the battle of the White Mountain, near Prague, this most hopeful movement was crushed by the army of the Austrian Emperor, and the ruthless persecution that followed seemed to dig a very deep grave for Reformation truth in Bohemian soil. Yet here too the motto of our story held good again. Not in vain did our brothers in that land suffer unto death for their faith. The Bush was not consumed. There has been a double resurrection.

The first is not directly concerned with our history, or with Bohemia, but it is too interesting to be passed over, and is a marvellous proof of the way in which the blood of the martyrs becomes the seed of the Church. Some of the exiles from Bohemia found refuge for a while in the adjacent country of Moravia. Among the Protestants living there was Comenius, a truly great man, one of the pioneers of the modern system of education, and author of *The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart*, the Bohemian Pilgrim's Progress,

which is well worth reading. But Moravia was no safe resting-place for Protestants, and the band dwindled to a very small number. Comenius became a wanderer on the face of the earth. When in Hungary he produced the first picture-book for children, and he believed he heard a Divine Voice from heaven bidding him tend the young plants carefully, and make them ready for a time when they might be nurtured in a more kindly soil. Men thought him a dreamer, and it is only now that his ideas are bearing fruit. He died in Holland, but the little flock in Moravia held together and at last a man appeared to rally them for a new enterprise. This was Christian David. He led the persecuted remnant into Germany, and there on his estate in Saxony another man, the pious Count Zinzendorf, was waiting to give them a home. He not only welcomed the emigrants, but did everything possible to build up a new religious settlement on the spot now known to all the world as Herrnhut—the Lord's keeping. That since 1727 has been the headquarters of the Moravian Church. It has a succession of bishops like the old Unity of the Brethren, observes many quaint and primitive rules, and holds fellowship gladly with all other Evangelical Christians. A General Synod is the supreme governing body, so it has somewhat of a Presbyterian character. But its glory lies in being the leading missionary Church in Christendom, its work abroad far exceeding in extent and importance its work at home. In Labrador, South and East Africa, the Himalayas, the West Indies, among

the lepers of Palestine—unto the uttermost parts of the earth—the Moravian missionaries preach the glad tidings, carrying the Book of Grace and the Cup of Salvation to all who are willing to receive them.

But we must now go back to Bohemia, and trace the course of events there. A hundred and sixty years had to pass before any Protestant revival was possible. These were awful times. It was no easy task for the Austrian emperors, aided by the Jesuits, to reduce the whole country to subjection, for at least two-thirds of the population and most of the nobility had professed the Reformed faith. And though they did succeed in bringing the land once more under Roman Catholic sway, the Edict of Toleration granted by the enlightened Joseph II. in 1781 revealed signs of life in the almost extinguished Church. Within two years, 90,000 persons left the Church of Rome, and declared themselves Protestants. Some became Lutherans, but the great majority preferred the Reformed or Presbyterian creed. One chief difficulty was to get ministers. These were at first supplied from Hungary. But the people were the poorest of the poor, crushed by long persecution, and the work of restoration was slow. It was hindered, too, by a suspicious government, which, while granting a measure of liberty, did so with a grudge and many restrictions. Even to-day under the Emperor Francis Joseph they have not full freedom to develop on their own lines, for the State compels all the pastors to be educated at Vienna, and will not allow the Church to

have a complete Presbyterian constitution. Yet withal they number 126,000 baptized members, the other Protestants in Bohemia numbering only 30,000. Bravely and hopefully do they fulfil their mission. Their students owe much to help given in Scotland and America, and though emigration to the New World and other causes tend to keep their membership low, it is very interesting to know that there is already at least one Bohemian Presbytery in the United States, consisting entirely of Bohemian Protestants who have settled in that country.

This martyr Church has been long separated from the other Presbyterian Churches by distance and the difficulties of communication. But in 1906 a remarkable gathering took place in Prague, Bohemia's historic capital. Ministers and elders had travelled thither from Great Britain and America to greet the descendants of John Hus. Never before had there been such a meeting, and the people came from all parts of the land to shake their more fortunate brethren by the hand, and hear what words of cheer we had to give them. We met in a church which was itself a striking object-lesson. It belonged nearly 700 years ago to the Dominican friars, and its rector was one of Hus's enemies. Afterwards it was a Protestant place of worship for nearly 200 years. Then it was Roman Catholic till the Edict of Toleration. Later it was sold as a granary, and finally bought back by the Presbyterians in 1850. The emblem of the Book with the Cup standing upon it was very conspicuous within the building. Much have our Bohemian friends

endured for the sake of freedom to read the Word of God, and to take the Communion according to Christ's command. It was a Scottish divine who first spoke of Bohemia as "the Land of the Book and the Cup" and its Reformed Church has certainly won the right to use that double symbol.

Almost five hundred years have passed since John Hus suffered martyrdom. All Bohemia—not the Protestant part alone—is preparing to celebrate that event in 1915, but the Reformed Church has most reason to be thankful for the message he sealed with his blood. Through her teaching he, being dead, yet speaketh, and will speak more loudly and clearly as the ages roll onward.

The books of Count Lutzow, especially his *History of Bohemia*, in "Everyman's Library," should be consulted. For Hus, see *The Dawn of the Reformation: the Age of Hus*, by Dr. H. B. Workman (Wesleyan Book-Room), and for the Moravian Church, the *Short History*, by J. E. Hutton (Moravian Publication Office, Fetter Lane, E.C.). James Baker's *Gleaming Dawn* is a good story of the Hussite wars; also *Crushed, yet Conquering*, by Deborah Alcock (R.T.S.).

## CHAPTER IX.

### AMONG THE MAGYARS—HERE AND THERE IN EUROPE.

THE second largest Presbyterian Church in the world to-day is to be found in Hungary. That rich and prosperous country, though linked with Austria under the rule of an Emperor-King, claims to be an independent nation. No one can reign over the Hungarian kingdom who is not first crowned with its ancient crown in Budapest, the twin capital city that stands in splendour on both sides of the lordly Danube.

Many races have a home in this spacious kingdom. You will see from the map how large it is, covering 125,000 square miles. The chief ruling inhabitants are the Magyars. They are descended from the same stock as the Turks, and we can see a similarity in their language, for they came from the same regions near the Caspian Sea. But in their migration westward they were converted to Christianity about the year 1000. For five centuries the monarchy of the Magyars flourished, till in 1526 a terrible disaster befell them. On the

battlefield of Mohacs the Turks, pressing on them from Constantinople, broke up their kingdom, and it was split into three parts, one becoming subject to the Austrian Emperor, a second to the Prince of Transylvania, a third passing under the sway of the Sultan of Turkey.

It was just at this time that the Reformation began to influence men's minds. We can see a wonderful Providence in the circumstance that in distracted Hungary the pure Gospel got a chance which it had not in countries where there was a strong absolute government in league with the Pope. The Austrian emperors hated the Reformed teaching and tried to put it down, but they were not powerful enough to do so in a land that has always resisted their despotism. The Turks actually protected the Protestants from persecution, and in Transylvania freedom of worship was allowed. So there grew up in Hungary a vigorous Reformed Church, in which the doctrines of Calvin found special favour, and the principles of Presbyterianism took root in a soil from which they have never since been expelled.

As the Hapsburgs—the ruling family of Austria—gained more and more power over Hungary, and succeeded in driving the Turks quite out of the country, they tried hard to bring the whole population back to the Roman Catholic faith. During the very years—1660–1680—that the Puritans and Covenanters suffered most in England and Scotland, many ministers and teachers of the Hungarian Reformed Church were banished to the galleys at Naples, and for a century more the cause of religious liberty was



under a dark cloud. But in 1781, as in Bohemia, an edict of toleration came into force, and the Church, though sorely shattered, began to revive.

In 1859 it had to pass through another struggle, this time for independence from the State, when it gave forth a declaration, worthy of Andrew Melville, the Scottish champion to whom we shall devote a chapter later on, "that there is no power either of God or man given to the Austrian dynasty to interfere with the organisation and constitution of the Hungarian Protestant Church." The State has now abandoned the idea of controlling the Church's affairs. It, however, taxes the Protestants just as it does the Romanists, for the support of their religion. People when they are taxed for anything do not generally give freely for that object. This explains why the Presbyterians of Hungary though wealthy are not very liberal givers, and indeed have only of late begun to raise money for Home and Foreign Missions. They do excellent work in training the young, keeping up a complete system of day schools and colleges for all grades. Sunday schools have not been long established, but are making good progress.

Hungary is far distant from the other lands where Presbyterianism is strong, and it has suffered by its isolation, also by having a language little understood beyond its own borders. Indeed only within the last few years has the great Presbyterian Church of Magyar-land come into line with sister Churches and taken its due place as a foremost regiment in a mighty army.

In 1881 it held its first National Synod in the old city of Debreczen. Now it is fully organised, with superintendent-bishops over provinces, yet so distinctly Presbyterian that in 1909 it was welcomed into the membership of the General Presbyterian Alliance. A notable event occurred two years later. Some thirty ministers and elders, representing the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales, and Canada, with four ladies, travelled to Hungary in order to show sympathy with their far-away spiritual kinsfolk. They were right royally entertained as they made their progress from city to city, visiting churches and colleges, and conferring with the pastors and people. The tidings they brought home of the existence of a Church, two and a half millions strong, in the far East of Europe, with an honourable Presbyterian history, and with vast possibilities for the days to come, was a glad surprise to many. As one of the Hungarian ministers said in their hearing : "The Reformed Church, imbued with the Hungarian spirit, has fought for centuries for the Kingdom of God, and her life will only cease with that of the nation. We have our difficulties, but we have also our advantages, and nothing will destroy the life of that Church over whose portals flames the Scottish motto, inspiring us with a holy certainty as to our future—'Nec tamen consumeatur.'"

Before we proceed to tell the story of the Presbyterian Church among our own English-speaking peoples, we

must close the tale, so far as the continent of Europe is concerned, by casting a glance here and there at lands which it has touched but slightly with its influence.

In Germany there is much that is akin to Presbyterianism, and yet few bodies that can be called by that name. Calvinism was once strong in the lands near the Rhine, known as the Palatinate, and the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), one of the most beautiful treasures of Evangelical doctrine and duty ever compiled, has come down to us as a precious relic of that time. To-day the Reformed Churches of the Eastern Rhine, the Evangelical Reformed Church of Hanover, the Reformed Church of Alsace-Lorraine, and some others form part of the Presbyterian family, but the most of Protestant Germany is Lutheran.

One would expect to see in Switzerland many Churches that look to Calvin and Geneva as models, but it is only in the three cantons of Geneva, Neuchatel, and Vaud that these are found. Besides the National Churches, there has arisen a Federation of Free Churches, and some of its ministers—Vinet, the fine Christian thinker, Merle D'Aubigne, who wrote the history of the Reformation, and Godet, the learned commentator—have won great fame. But Zwingli, the reformer of Zurich, has had more influence in his country than Calvin in deciding how Churches should be governed.

So recently as 1876 the Free Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway was founded on Presbyterian lines,

its constitution being largely copied from the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It is as yet a small body, but its influence is being felt in the State Church, which is now struggling for greater liberty.

The weak Presbyterian remnant has a hard time in intensely Roman Catholic countries like Spain and Poland. Persecution almost made an end of every kind of Protestantism in Spain, and it is only now beginning to take living form again. In Warsaw, the capital of Poland, there is still a Reformed Church with 3000 communicants. (You generally find that when on the Continent a Church is called *Reformed* it has more or less of a Presbyterian character.) Even in Greece there is a little Church of this pattern that holds out to us the right hand of fellowship.

Let us frankly admit that the spiritual future of these European lands lies under God's guidance with any truly Christian movement, whatever be its name or origin, that will gather into itself the fragments yet remaining of the Bush, burning but not consumed.

For information as to Presbyterianism in Hungary, see the pamphlet edited by Dr. Mathews, secretary of the Presbyterian Alliance, on *The Churches of Eastern Europe*, containing papers read by leading Hungarian representatives at conference in Budapest, September 1911.

Dr. Smellie's edition of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, in his series of "Books for the Heart," gives the questions and answers in both German and English, with a fine introduction.

## CHAPTER X.

### JOHN KNOX AND THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND.

ONLY now in this tenth chapter do we reach the heart of our story, for it was in Scotland that the Presbyterian Church took the shape that men know best to-day, and there the keenest battles were fought for Christ's Crown and Covenant. The leading champion in this great conflict was John Knox.

Let me try to set the main events of his life and work before you in a few pictures.

In or near the little town of Haddington—in a district well known for its fertile fields and rich orchards—Knox was born, probably between 1513 and 1515, of humble parents. We can see an oak tree, planted by Thomas Carlyle, another famous Scot, to mark the supposed spot. And we may be sure that Knox often worshipped in the beautiful parish church, called "the Lamp of Lothian," which rises on the banks of the river Tyne. Suppose we enter while a service is going on. The preacher is George Wishart, gentlest and most lovable of

reformers, who has brought the new doctrines from abroad, and he tells how men are saved, not by rites and ceremonies, but by faith in Christ alone. The hue and cry has been raised against him as a heretic, and we note a stalwart young fellow in the congregation standing near the preacher, carrying a two-handed sword in his defence. That is John Knox, whom Wishart has won over to the Reformation cause. All Scotland is to know his mettle.

The scene now changes to the Castle of St. Andrews. The grey old city, named after the Apostle who came to be honoured as the patron saint of Scotland, has played a notable part in history. Standing on a rocky and exposed promontory jutting into the North Sea, its castle was the prison of Wishart and the place of his burning in 1546; before that, less than twenty years after the death of Hus, Paul Craw, a Bohemian, and Patrick Hamilton, a noble Scottish gentleman, had suffered martyrdom for the Reformed Faith. It was the proud Cardinal Beaton, the real ruler of St. Andrews, who had brought about Wishart's death. Now in revenge a band of the bolder spirits of the time has seized the castle and assassinated the Cardinal. They hold it as a Protestant stronghold, and John Knox is among those who take refuge there. He receives his first call to preach the Gospel. Though he had been ordained as a priest of Rome, he thunders forth that "the Roman Kirk as corrupted is the synagogue of Satan," and that "the Pope is not the Vicar of Christ

but Antichrist." His sermons become the talk of the town, and he dispenses the Lord's Supper in both kinds to what is really the first Reformed congregation in Scotland.

But the time has not yet come for the victory of the Reformation. The Queen Regent is strongly opposed to it, and the King of France, her close ally, sends a fleet to St. Andrews to capture the castle. Its garrison is forced to surrender, and Knox is carried off to serve as a French galley-slave for a year and a half. This is the most terrible experience of his life. He and his companions are chained by the neck in couples, compelled sometimes to row ten or twelve hours without a break, goaded by frequent strokes of a whip, closely packed at night on a little straw gnawed by rats and mice; we almost wonder that any of them survive the ordeal. Knox bears the marks of it to the end of his days, but never for a moment does he yield to the temptation to renounce his faith. He is sure that deliverance will come, and it comes in the spring of 1549 when by an exchange of prisoners he is released.

We next find Knox in England, where he stays for five years. Not yet allowed to go back to Scotland, he lives as near to it as he can—in the border town of Berwick-on-Tweed, and in Newcastle. He has, however, full liberty to preach, for the young King Edward VI. is on the throne and Reformation truth is winning its way. In a later chapter we shall see how he helped to lay the foundations of Presbyterianism in



England. Meanwhile we note that he refuses to be made an English bishop, though he has something to do with the preparation of the English Prayer Book. But King Edward dies when only sixteen years old, and his sister Mary, who succeeds him, tries to make an end of Protestantism in the country. England can no longer be a safe home for John Knox, so he escapes to the continent of Europe.

Where shall he go? Remember now what we said about Calvin and Geneva. The Swiss city becomes Knox's refuge. He hails it as "the greatest school of Christ since the days of the Apostles," and Calvin as a master at whose feet he delights to sit. Yet he too takes an honoured place as a teacher. For a while he is absent, taking charge of a congregation at Frankfort, in Germany, but he comes back to Geneva, and we may visit to-day the very chapel, just under the shadow of the cathedral, where he preached for two and a half years to the English refugees. He has at one time among his elders several men who afterwards were bishops in England, and another who founded the great Bodleian Library at Oxford. In this same chapel of the Auditoire in July 1909 I attended a service when a professor who has written one of the best lives of Knox delivered a sermon from the Reformer's pulpit, while among others in the congregation were the Moderator and the Lord High Commissioner of the Kirk of Scotland, with many ministers and elders of various Churches. We who were there could not help thinking of the three and a

half centuries of Knox's influence, and thanking God for the labours of His dauntless servant.

Such an ardent lover of his country could not but long to return to it at the earliest opportunity. From Geneva he makes a flying visit to Scotland to see how his friends are getting on; he finds that things are ripening for a great change, and at last he goes back to take the lead. By 1559 the people are more than ready to cast off the yoke of Rome, and to welcome the man who can show them how to do it. Edinburgh is now Knox's home for the rest of his life. A Parliament sitting there declares Scotland a Protestant nation. But we who are studying the history of the Presbyterian Church are more interested in a little meeting held in the dingy old Magdalen Chapel down in the Cowgate. For there in December 1560 is convened the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Only forty-two members are present, "concerned upon the things which are to set forth God's glory, and the weal of His Kirk in this realm." The place is worth visiting still. It contains the oldest stained glass in Scotland, older than Knox's time, and it is used to-day by the Edinburgh Medical Mission. But its fame lies in the fact that here John Knox set his hands to the upbuilding of the Scottish Kirk.

Less than a year passes, and we follow him to a very different scene. Parliament may decide, and a General Assembly may decree, but what if the Queen of the land persist in attending the Roman Catholic Mass, and in thwarting the plans of the Reformers? For

Mary, Queen of Scots, has now arrived from France to occupy the Scottish throne, and she reigns at Holyrood Palace in all the splendour of her beauty. Knox is summoned to her presence. She is amazed at his plain speaking. "I perceive," she says, "that my subjects shall obey you and not me." "My travail," replies Knox, "is that both princes and subjects obey God." The wily Queen finds more than her match in this rugged and fearless minister. Among the figures that haunt old Holyrood there is none so impressive as this, the stern, grey-bearded preacher, who went there to witness for the truth, and to defend the cause of the Kirk against the subtle plottings of its enemies.

Walk we next up the Canongate and High Street to the Church of St. Giles. The pulpit there is Knox's throne; what he utters from it rings in the ears not of Edinburgh only but of all Scottish folk. "He is so active and vigorous that he is like to ding the pulpit in blads and flee out of it"—so does a writer of the time describe the manner of his preaching. Sermons counted for much in those days, and John Knox backed up his by action. On week-days we see him active in organising. His *Book of Discipline* is the first great charter of Presbyterian Church life, and his *Book of Common Order* the first guide to its worship. Kirk-Session, Synod, and General Assembly are firmly established. Only the institution of the Presbytery is wanting to complete the edifice. In every parish there is to be a school for "the virtuous education and godly upbringing-

ing of the youth of the realm." Knox's plans for his country's welfare are greater than his power to carry them out, for the grasping landlords, with their eyes upon the rich lands of the Church, will not grant him the money that is needed to put his good and wise schemes into practice.

The house in Netherbow, just where the High Street of Edinburgh joins with the Canongate, is the place we think of most as connected with Knox's closing years. After his last sermon in St. Giles's we can picture him going home, from his pulpit to his death-bed, leaning on his staff, and accompanied by almost his entire congregation. His wife reads to him from the chapter where he "cast his first anchor"—the 17th of the Gospel of St. John—and he passes from this life, lifting his hand in token that he rests in the comfortable promises he had taught to others.

A simple stone in the pavement, with his initials—I. K.—and the date—1572—marks the spot of his burial in what was then St. Giles's Churchyard. The Regent Morton pronounced his epitaph: "Here lies one who neither feared nor flattered any flesh." Only such a brave, intrepid soul could have rebuilt the Scottish Zion in stormy times like these. It is fitting that his mortal remains should lie in what is still the throbbing "heart of Midlothian."

Let the sound of those he wrote for,  
 Let the feet of those he fought for,  
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

M'Crie's *Life of Knox* is still a classic, but much new light is shed on the Reformer's career by modern biographies—Professor Hume Brown's and Professor Cowan's. Dr. Hume Brown has written an excellent sketch of *John Knox and his Times* for young people (Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier; 1½d.). Knox and the Scottish Reformation have not received full justice in fiction. See Margaret H. Robertson's *John Knox's Bairns* (Nelson), the first part of Galt's *Ringan Gilhaize*, and Sir Walter Scott's *Monastery* and *Abbot*. Lord Balfour of Burleigh's little book on *The Rise and Development of Presbyterianism in Scotland* will be found a useful companion to our Chapters X.—XX.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ANDREW MELVILLE, SCHOLAR AND PATRIOT.

PRESBYTERIAN Scotland was not made in a day. John Knox laid the foundations, but nearly a century and a half of struggle had to pass before the house was firmly built. Though the power of Rome was broken once for all, freedom of worship and government took a longer time to secure. Kings had to be defied, brave men to go into exile, Covenants to be signed, martyrs to suffer unto death. Fierce was the fire that flamed in the Bush, yet withal it was not consumed.

The first name among the worthies of this period of trial and triumph is that of Andrew Melville. For fifty years after Knox—from 1572 to 1622—his is the strongest spirit in the conflict. Baffled in his high purposes, and ending his career in a foreign land, he was ever a fighter with the future in view, and on the Scottish Church of after days he left the stamp of his fervent will and strenuous character.

Melville's life is a moving picture of scenes that transport us quickly from one point of the compass to another. Scotland, England, and the continent of Europe all felt his fiery influence. We see him studying in St. Andrews and Paris—teaching in Poitiers and Geneva—returning to his native land to be principal of Glasgow University and leader of the Kirk—back again to St. Andrews to reign there as head of St. Mary's College for more than twenty-five years—summoned to London to witness before kings and bishops in the palace of Hampton Court—confined in the Tower as a prisoner—banished at last to France, and dying a professor in the College of Sedan. It is with difficulty that we follow on the map his rapid movements, but we can still hear across the ages the fearless tones of his voice. He had a sharp wit and a hot temper, and his words carried a bite in them that remains to this day. Thanks to the pious and loving record of his nephew, James Melville, we can form a true idea of what this man was, both in public and private; from the pages of that old diary in the quaint Scots dialect we can call up before our eyes the image of a great scholar, a dauntless patriot, and a heroic Christian.

In Montrose, his birthplace, we note young Andrew, a delicate lad, "taking pleasure in nothing so meikle as his book." Going to St. Andrews to pursue his studies, he becomes the favourite pupil of John Douglas the Provost. "He wad tak the boy betwixt his legs at the fire in winter, and blessing him say, 'My sillie



fatherless and motherless child, it's ill to wit what God may mak of thee yet.'” And he leaves St. Andrews with the reputation of being “the best philosopher, poet, and Grecian of any young master in the land.”

Next we behold him, not yet out of his teens, roaming abroad, after the fashion of aspiring Scots of that time, in quest of knowledge. He has his share of thrilling adventures. At Poitiers he acts as tutor to a French boy. The city is besieged by the Huguenots under Coligny, and by accident a cannon-ball comes crashing into the room where master and scholar are sitting, mortally wounding the poor youth, who flings his arms round his tutor's neck and cries out in the Greek language he had been taught, “Master, I have finished my course.” “That bairn,” writes his nephew, “gaed never out of his heart.” This gives us a glimpse into the tender soul of the man.

With Geneva, Melville has about as close a link as Knox, for he spends five years there as Professor of Latin in the Academy under Beza. He does not return to Scotland till 1574—two years after Knox's death. His fame as a scholar has travelled home before him, and he steps at once into the highest positions the land of his birth has to offer. In young Scotland there is a great work to do in training students for the ministry and the other learned professions; Melville at Glasgow, and later at St. Andrews, puts his whole soul into the task. It is one of the glories of the Presbyterian Church in all countries that it requires a thorough grounding in

Arts and Theology from those who are to preach in its pulpits. Melville even more than Knox established that tradition. Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Divinity he knew and taught as scarcely another man of that time could do, and he fired his students with his own enthusiasm.

But he stands out in history as pre-eminently a Christian patriot. He loved his country with a pure passion, and it was his patriotism that made him so zealous a Presbyterian. Why? Because he saw that liberty and progress in Scotland were bound up with the system that gave Christ's people their rights, that would not allow kings or bishops or powerful lords to oppress the Church and compel her to act as they pleased. This was just the danger that threatened the land in Melville's time.

King James VI. of Scotland and I. of England believed in bishops because he could make them the ready tools of his tyranny. There were ministers willing to be made bishops for the sake of the wealth and privilege they could thus purchase. And there were lords who used the bishops as mere instruments to draw money for their own ends, as much of the land had belonged to the former Roman Catholic prelates, and it was easier to keep hold of it by preserving the old names and titles. It was all a trick, and Melville saw through it. He got the General Assembly of the Church to adopt a more complete Presbyterian plan of government than had been possible in the days of Knox, and to do away with any one rank of ministers superior to the rest. The king was

but a boy when Melville was building up a strong and independent Church, and when he became a man, and so had more influence, he set himself with all his might to undo that good work. So began a fight that lasted for many a year. We may say that the gauntlet was flung down in Falkland Palace in 1596. That is perhaps the most memorable scene in Melville's life. We see him catching his royal master by the sleeve, calling him "God's sillie vassal," and uttering words such as a subject has seldom dared to speak to a monarch, words that still stir us like a battle-cry: "I maun tell you, there are twa kings and twa kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus the King and His kingdom the Kirk—whose subject King James the Saxt is, and of whose kingdom not a king nor a lord nor a head, but a member."

We are not surprised that when James became king of England as well as Scotland, and felt his power to be greater than in the little realm of the North, he determined to pay Melville back for these bold words. So he called him up to London, tried in vain to bend or break him, had him confined in the Tower for four years, and only set him at liberty on condition that he never set foot in Scotland again. With Melville banished, it was possible for James to restore bishops to the Church according to his desire, and from 1610 to 1638 they held their places. In later chapters we shall see how the principles of "Maister Andro" triumphed after he was dead. Yet we are not to think of him as an

unhappy exile. He had said long before : " The earth is the Lord's, and my fatherland is wherever well-doing is. God be glorified ! It is not in the power of man to hang or exile His Truth." Now he proved this in his own experience. For eleven years he taught in Sedan, " well pleased with old age—trying daily to learn something new " ; then at last he passed to his reward.

The town of Sedan is best known to-day as the scene of France's final disaster in the war with Prussia in 1870, but to Presbyterians and lovers of spiritual independence it has a better fame as the last home on earth of the valiant Andrew Melville.

The story of Melville has been well told by Dr. A. Smellie, in a booklet written specially for young people (Melrose ; 1½d.). Morison's life in the " Famous Scots " Series is the most complete recent biography. Scott's *Fortunes of Nigel* still presents the best portrait in fiction of Melville's royal foe, but no novelist, so far as we know, has attempted to depict Melville himself.

## CHAPTER XII.

### SIGNING THE COVENANT.

THE Scottish Church had lost the one man who was bold and strong enough to check King James's plans. Now it seemed as if he could do as he liked. The people of Scotland must needs accept bishops to rule over their Kirk. That, however, was not enough. There was doubt in certain quarters as to whether these men were genuine successors of the Apostles, as the bishops in England claimed to be. So three of them had to go up to London and submit to the humiliation of being anointed and set apart by English prelates; then, having received this stamp, they went home and consecrated the other Scottish bishops. Remember that at this time, and for a long while after, there was very bitter feeling between the two countries, and it wounded the national pride of Scots folk to think that their ministers needed to go to the Church of England to get their authority.

Another matter that King James had set his heart upon was to make the worship of the two Churches as

nearly the same as possible. In England the Communion was taken kneeling, and sometimes in private in cases of sickness. Baptism was often administered in the home instead of the Church, and Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and other holy days were observed as well as the Lord's Day. In Scotland these things were looked upon then as "rags of Popery," and though we have now come to see that scarcely any of them are worth fighting about, and indeed that some are quite good in themselves, it was a great mistake to force such points on the Church simply because of the King's will. But an Assembly held at Perth in 1618 was obliged to accept Five Articles compelling these observances, and there was great opposition among the people. Especially did they object to kneeling at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for this appeared to them to be worshipping the sacred elements after the manner of the Church of Rome. For the rest of James's life the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland was as Episcopal as he dared to make it, and was not allowed to have a mind of its own on any question in dispute.

Charles I., who succeeded his father in 1625, held the same ideas, and he thought he would be able to carry them still further. He found, however, that the patience of his Scottish subjects was strained at last to the breaking-point. Bishops had been foisted on them, the Five Articles of Perth were being enforced, but as yet John Knox's *Service Book* remained in use in the Churches, and Charles, taking the bad advice of Laud, Archbishop

of Canterbury, was foolish enough to compel the introduction into Scotland of a new English Prayer Book. It was the last spark that was needed to kindle a hot flame of wrath. On a July day in 1637 Laud's Liturgy or Book of Prayers was read for the first time by Dean Hannay in the Kirk of St. Giles in Edinburgh. In the congregation was one Jenny Geddes, a humble stall-woman, who flung her stool at the head of the Dean, with the angry words: "Out, thou fause thief! dost thou say mass at my lug?" She gave voice to the rage that was burning in the hearts of the people. They did not object to the reading of prayers—for to that they had been accustomed—but to the reading of a Prayer Book sent down from England, which they believed, rightly or wrongly, to contain the deadly errors of Popery. For Laud and other advisers of King Charles were bringing the Church of England in several respects much nearer to Rome, and a great fear arose in Scotland that this was but part of a plot to restore the hated system from which the Reformation had set them free.

It was an old Scottish custom for nobles and people to enter into Bonds or Covenants, to defend each other against common foes. This had been done more than once in Reformation days. In the face of danger from Romanism, a solemn pledge had been taken to resist it to the death, while remaining true to the lawful government of the land. Now the danger seemed as threatening as ever. The old horror of the papal power was revived by the appearance of the new "Mass-book"



from England, and while there was no desire to disown the King's rule, a resolute purpose showed itself everywhere to contend for the Protestant religion at all costs.

So a new Covenant was drawn up, founded on one signed in 1581. It condemned "the innovations and evils of the time as contrary to the Word of God, tending to the re-establishment of the Popish religion and tyranny, and to the subverting and ruin of the true Reformed faith." It included a promise and oath to continue in the profession and obedience of that faith, to defend it to the uttermost of their powers all the days of their life, and yet to stand to the defence of the Sovereign with their means and lives. We may wonder now at this touching combination of faithfulness to an unworthy monarch with firm opposition to the policy he was trying to force on the country. That is just the pathos of the whole Covenanting struggle—loyal folk driven sorely against their will into disloyalty to their king because of a higher loyalty to God.

In St. Giles's Cathedral, that historic shrine of Scottish Presbyterianism, the signal was given for this great battle's beginning. One can see there to-day tablets in memory of both the doughty Jenny and the unfortunate Dean against whom she hurled her missile. It is now possible to think with calmness of a scene that had its ludicrous side. But not many months passed before serious work was set in hand.

The scene changes to a spot not more than a stone's-throw from St. Giles's, in the same ancient city of Edin-

burgh. Greyfriars Churchyard is another of Scotland's sacred places. We behold it thronged on a winter afternoon with some sixty thousand people. They have come from every county of the Lowlands to bear witness to the truth they hold most dear. After service in the Church, the Covenant is spread out for signature; right hands are uplifted all round, solemn oaths sworn, warm tears shed in token of allegiance to the good cause. Then the work of signing goes on, some writing after their names "until death," some drawing their own blood and using it in place of ink. The Covenant is laid on the flat tombstones. Men and women of both high and low degree in an extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm pledge themselves to the stern fight in prospect. That day is far too short for the task in progress. The signing is continued from day to day throughout the land till well-nigh all Scotland is committed to the deed.

If John Knox laid the foundation-stone of the Scottish Zion, and Andrew Melville built its walls, it was the nation in Greyfriars Churchyard that dedicated the building. Thenceforth the enemies of the Presbyterian Kirk had to reckon with the fervent spirit of a people intent on securing religious freedom. Looking back on that memorable scene, we remember not so much the words and the names on that old Covenant, or even the questions of Church rule and worship that then agitated men's minds. We are stirred by the passionate resolve of these ancestors of ours to be true to their conscience

of what was right before God and man, and to allow no earthly power to dictate the manner of their approach to the Highest and the Holiest.

We come now to the extensive literature of the Covenant. Dr. Smellie's *Men of the Covenant* is a recognised classic which young people should soon get to know. For a thoroughly reliable sketch of the main facts nothing is better than Dr. Hay Fleming's *Story of the Scottish Covenants in Outline*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### UNDER THE BANNER OF BLUE.

FOR more than fifty years after the memorable work in Greyfriars Churchyard the history of Scottish Presbyterianism is the history of the Covenanters, of those banded together to secure the liberties of the Kirk, and to resist the hated systems of "Popery and Prelacy." It was a time of strenuous fighting and valiant testimony, of angry, not always charitable, words, of deeds wise and unwise, but often rising to the loftiest point of heroism. We cannot hope in two chapters to do more than sketch the main features of this period. Fortunately, there are many books that tell the great story in full detail.

The Covenanting era naturally divides itself into two, and the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658 marks the dividing line. During the first twenty years the cause of the Covenant was on the whole successful. "The Banner of Blue," its accepted symbol, was carried to victory for a while in both Scotland and England, and though there was unhappy conflict between English

Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians after the execution of Charles I., we may say that the Religious Freedom was winning its way all that time. Let us trace the chief steps of its progress.

From Greyfriars in Edinburgh we pass to the venerable Cathedral of Glasgow, the only ancient church in Scotland of large dimensions that was left untouched in its simple beauty at the Reformation. In less than a year after the signing of the Covenant it became the scene of what has been called "the Second Reformation" of the Scottish Kirk. The General Assembly held within its walls was the first free gathering of ministers and elders that had taken place since King James began his attempts to establish Episcopacy. Glasgow, which is now the second city of the British Empire, was then but a small town. Her motto, "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word," shows how warmly attached her citizens have ever been to Gospel Truth. The stately edifice described by Andrew Fairservice in Scott's *Rob Roy* as "a brave kirk—a solid, weel-jointed mason-wark, that will stand as lang as the warld, keep hands and gunpowther aff it," was occupied for a month by an Assembly of Scotland's choicest sons, bent on setting her Church to rights. So keen was the interest that a crowd of spectators was ever pressing in upon them, and even jostling the members in their anxiety to see and hear what was going on.

Two figures stand out prominently in that Assembly

—the Moderator or presiding minister, Alexander Henderson of Leuchars in Fife, a man of strong common sense and able mastery of affairs, and the Royal Commissioner, the Marquis of Hamilton, who, when he saw how thoroughly the King's plans were being upset by the resolute champions of the Kirk, tried, but in vain, to dissolve the meeting. For these men had come to Glasgow to "cast down the walls of Jericho," and were determined not to go away till their task was finished. So the bishops were deposed and excommunicated, Laud's Service Book was condemned, the Five Articles of Perth were repealed, the Covenant was once more ratified, and Presbyterian Church government was firmly re-established in the land.

All this meant defiance to the King and his English advisers, and the next step was open war. It is a pity when a Church and a nation have to take up arms to gain their liberties, but there was no help for it in this case. Charles would only yield to force, and to force he did yield when after a successful campaign in Scotland the Covenanters, with the Blue Banner at their head, crossed the Border and put his army to flight at Newburn, near Newcastle.

Now England had begun to take part in the Covenanting fray. The Puritans there were smarting under a sense of wrong as deep as the Presbyterians of Scotland, and they joined hands as allies, with the dream before them of seeing One Form of Pure Religion accepted by both countries. It was a glorious dream,

though the result proved that Great Britain was not yet ripe for its fulfilment. But good men did their best to bring it about, and their labour was not altogether in vain.

So the scene changes again to a sanctuary still more famous than St. Giles, Greyfriars, or Glasgow Cathedral—the Abbey of Westminster, under the shadow of England's Houses of Parliament. The whole nation can claim a heritage in that stately and venerable temple of God, and Presbyterians have a niche among its sacred memorials. Here on the banks of the Thames an Assembly of learned divines gathers, to devise, if possible, a uniform Church system for Great Britain. A second bond, known as the Solemn League and Covenant, is drawn up, and in the church of St. Margaret's, close to the Abbey, it is signed and sealed by Lords and Commons as well as by the members of Assembly. For nearly five years the Westminster divines continue to sit, first in the beautiful Henry VII. chapel of the Abbey, then in the fair Jerusalem Chamber, where little more than thirty years before the Bible, surer bond among British Christians than any covenant, had been translated from the original tongues into English. Wonderful things were accomplished there for the Presbyterianism of the world. The Confession of Faith, which we reverence as the historic Presbyterian creed, was framed. A new Directory of Public Worship was prepared. The Shorter Catechism, which has for ages been the text-book of Christian doctrine for Presbyterian



children, was compiled. A metrical Psalter was adopted for use.

England had more to do than Scotland with these measures, but though the Scottish representatives to the Assembly were few in number, their influence was great. Alexander Henderson, the wise moderator, was there. So was Samuel Rutherford, ardent lover of Jesus Christ, as his immortal letters show. Robert Baillie, George Gillespie, Archibald Johnston of Warriston, were also prominent in debate. It was proved then, as it has been many times since, that the little country north of the Tweed has a power far beyond its size or the number of its inhabitants. But by a curious turn of history the work done at Westminster yielded its fruit, not so much on the soil of England, where it grew up perhaps too quickly, as on that of Scotland, which received it thankfully and gave it an abiding home.

There were now two Covenants to fight for, and all would have gone well, at least for a while, if the English people had been ready to accept the Presbyterian way of things. Many, however, clung to Episcopacy, and an unhappy strife arose between the Independents under Oliver Cromwell, the Puritan leader now coming to the front, and those who wanted to force the Westminster plan upon everybody. The condemnation and death of Charles I., which was chiefly the work of the Independents, roused the wrath of the Presbyterians, who had always shown a touching loyalty to their monarch, even when they felt themselves bound to do

battle against him. This was seen in the action—chivalrous but foolish—of the Scottish Church in crowning Charles II. as king in opposition to the English Commonwealth, hoping as they did that he would be true to the Covenants to which he falsely swore. So Cromwell found it necessary to lead an army to Scotland to subdue the Presbyterians. Never was there a more unfortunate war. The famous Protector sought civil and religious liberty for the British nation, and too many of the Presbyterians did not see that in fighting for Charles they were really fighting for the riveting again of their old yoke. They were beaten at Dunbar, and when beaten took to quarrelling among themselves.

The opposing parties were known as Resolutioners and Protesters. The Resolutioners wished to see King Charles restored, and were willing to make terms with the enemies of the Covenant; the Protesters insisted on maintaining the Covenant to the letter and would have nothing to do with the King. This kind of strife was to bring much misery and division to Scotland in after days, but we must not blame these men too much for their narrowness of view. One side trusted too fondly in the goodwill of a king who was to betray them. The other side did not always realise that freedom and justice for all are more important than any form of words or system of government. Yet, whatever their mistakes, they were to prove in the days of tribulation and martyrdom that awaited them how steadfast was their adherence

to what they loved to call the Crown Rights of the Redeemer.

The Solemn League and Covenant  
Now brings a smile, now brings a tear;  
But sacred Freedom, too, was theirs:  
If thou'rt a slave, indulge thy sneer.

Oliver Cromwell died in September 1658. We have seen how he interposed to protect persecuted Presbyterians in Italy—only the force of circumstances made him appear unfriendly to Presbyterians in Scotland. Unfortunately, Scottish Christians did not understand this great Englishman and his ideals, and, like many English folk to-day, he found it difficult to understand them. They resented his interference with Assemblies and Synods, but he feared that they could not be trusted to pursue a policy of toleration, and there was always the dread of a Stuart restoration that would ruin all. The purifying fires of persecution were needed to separate the gold from the dross of Covenanting principles. The Banner of Blue was to receive a new consecration in the horrors of "The Killing Time."

We think of the "Banner of Blue" as the picturesque symbol of the Covenanting cause. Robert Baillie in his *Letters and Journals* gives a graphic description of the Scottish army as it lay encamped on Duns Law in June 1639. "Every company had flying at the captain's tent door a *brave new colour* stamped with the Scottish arms and this ditton, 'for Christ's Crown and Covenant,' in golden letters." This colour has generally

been supposed to be blue, but it is certain that the Covenanting flags were not all blue in the seventeenth century. Some were of pale yellow silk; the Lesmahagow flag of blue silk is said to have been carried both at Drumclog and Bothwell. Wodrow's statement should, however, be remembered: "There never was a pair of colours at any conventicle in Scotland." The people assembled to hear the preaching of the Gospel, and though they sometimes carried arms for self-defence, it was not to be expected that they would take banners with them unless they belonged to a fighting regiment. Dr. Hay Fleming finds no evidence that the so-called "Bluidy Banner," the blue standard exhibited in the Scottish Historical Exhibition of 1911 bearing the triple inscription "Jehovah Nissi, For Christ and His Truth, and No quarter for the active enemies of the Covenant," was ever really used in the Covenanting wars. He believes it to be only a Cameronian flag of the early part of the eighteenth century.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### MARTYRS FOR FAITH AND FREEDOM.

ON a May day in 1660 Charles II. made his triumphal entry into London, and there began for England a reign of shame, for Scotland a time of tyranny and persecution that burned itself like a fiery flame into the memory of the nation. The King hated with a bitter hatred the Covenants he had been obliged to sign. He considered Presbyterianism "no religion for a gentleman," and, indeed, his only fixed purpose was to use the power of the throne to gratify his selfish and wicked desires. The men whom he chose to be his counsellors were even more determined to crush the religious liberties of the people. All the might of the State was directed against the Covenanters. But it was in these days of defeat and disaster that the Scottish Church was perfected through suffering, and enabled to win a final victory over her enemies.

Yet it did appear at first as if all was lost. A "Drunken Parliament" abolished the Presbyterian

constitution settled at Glasgow in 1638, swept away all Acts relating to the Covenants, and made short work of the Westminster Assembly and its doings. By royal proclamation government by bishops was re-established, and 400 faithful ministers were ejected from their charges because they refused to submit to the new authority.

Quite close to the kirk of St. Giles, where the battle of the Covenants began, a scaffold is set up. There at the old Mercat Cross of Edinburgh some of the best blood in Scotland is poured forth in sacrifice. The Marquis of Argyll had put the crown on the King's head at Scone ten years before. "Now," runs his dying testimony, "he hastens me to a better crown than his own. I could die like a Roman, but I choose rather to die like a Christian." James Guthrie, the lion-hearted minister of Stirling, meets courageously the same fate. "My conscience I cannot submit." And he yields his life with a shout—"The Covenants, the Covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving." Other victims follow, among them Johnston of Warriston who drew up the bond in Greyfriars Churchyard.

The pulpits of the land are filled by curates, nominees of the bishops and the King. But the great mass of the people will not listen to them. The churches are deserted for the open air where gatherings known as "conventicles" are held. In silent glens and on lonely moors the expelled ministers preach the Gospel and dispense the Sacraments to the loyal members of their

flocks. Such meetings are declared illegal, and those attending them are arrested and severely punished by the law.

No wonder there is rebellion. Men in the West and South-west rush to arms in defence of their religion. A band of resolute Covenanters marches on Edinburgh, but is beaten badly at Rullion Green among the Pentland hills. Dire vengeance is taken on the poor prisoners, some of whom have to endure the horrible tortures of the "Boot," a wooden frame fitted with iron spikes, driven into the foot by successive blows of a hammer. The most famous martyr of the Pentland rising was Hugh Mackail, the "Ephraim MacBriar" of Sir Walter Scott's *Old Mortality*, but more truly described by Dr. Smellie as "the Sir Galahad of the Covenant." The strength of this delicate young man was "as the strength of ten, because his heart was pure." He passed to God with words of welcome on his lips to Death and Eternal Life.

For the next twelve years or so the persecution was not so violent, this time being known as "the Blink," the sun shining in fitful gleams upon the distressed folk during the cloudy and dark day. Acts of Indulgence were passed, allowing Presbyterian ministers who recognised the authority of the bishops to return to their charges. Some good men thought it their duty to submit in the circumstances, and were harshly judged by the unbending Covenanters for so doing. One of the bishops, the saintly Robert Leighton, who rose to be



archbishop of Glasgow, was a peacemaker fallen on evil times. He did his best to reconcile Episcopalians and Presbyterians, but in vain; and he retired to England a disappointed man. The staunch adherents of the Covenanting cause would not accept any indulgence from the State, and it was clear that no half-measures of this kind would pacify an angry nation.

Of the ruling powers no one was more detested than James Sharp, archbishop of St. Andrews. He had once been a plain Presbyterian minister and a supporter of the Covenant, but was now a crafty prelate and cruel persecutor. When passing in his carriage along Magus Moor in the early summer of 1679 he was done to death by a band of desperate men. This became the signal for a new revolt.

Less than a month after, the quiet of a Sabbath morning in a remote part of Lanarkshire is disturbed by the clash of arms. A conventicle at Drumclog which has been turned into an armed camp is attacked by the ruthless Claverhouse and his dragoons. The persecuted worshippers go forth to the conflict singing the 76th psalm, and win a wonderful triumph over the royal troops. It seems that Scotland is really rising at last to assert her rights, and the victors make bold to ask a free Parliament and a free General Assembly as the condition of laying down their weapons. But, alas! they are not united among themselves, and the mustering of the King's forces under the Duke of Monmouth proves too much for their undisciplined host. Another Sabbath

day, three weeks after Drumclog, sees them dispersed in dismal rout. Its scene, Bothwell Brig on the Clyde, is well known to me, for I lived in that parish for many years, and on the 224th anniversary of the battle took part in the unveiling of a monument to the heroes who fell there—not in vain. They suffered temporary defeat; their witness still lives in a Church and a country that owe much to their sacrifices. But for the time there was an end of high hopes and a beginning of more grievous bondage. Greyfriars Churchyard by the irony of history was transformed into a prison for those who had been only too faithful to the Covenant there signed. Penned up like sheep for the slaughter, or shipped across the seas to be sold as slaves, few survived the fearful ordeal.

The poor Kirk of Scotland was now in the very depths of her agony. Torn asunder by conflict on the question of indulgences, her voice of complaint silenced, her most devoted sons in prison or in exile, what could she do? While some were inclined to lie low before the storm, others were stirred to more daring defiance than ever. Twelve months after the disaster of Bothwell twenty armed horsemen rode up the main street of Sanquhar in Dumfriesshire and with exercise of praise and prayer affixed to the Cross a strongly worded document, disowning Charles as sovereign and declaring war against him as a tyrant and usurper. Richard Cameron, their dauntless leader, was soon to die on the field of Aird's Moss, but he lived to give his name to the new sect of

Cameronians whose watchword was allegiance to the Covenants at all costs.

It now seemed as if the very cause of Protestantism was in danger. James, Duke of York, the heir to the throne, known to be a bigoted Romanist, came to Scotland as Royal Commissioner. While he presided over the barbarities of the Boot and the Thumbscrew in the Council at Edinburgh, the dragoons under Claverhouse, Dalziel and Grierson of Lagg, were carrying on their brutal work throughout the land, breaking up conventicles, harrying men and women and even children to death. The years from 1684 to 1688 are specially remembered as "The Killing Time." Out of the rich records of the martyrs of this period let me take two—one of a brave lad, the other of a heroic maiden.

Andrew Hislop, seventeen years of age, after seeing his widowed mother's house plundered and then pulled down for the crime of giving refuge to a fugitive Cameronian, was wandering in the fields when he fell into the hands of Claverhouse and the still more cruel Johnston of Westerhall. Sentence of death was passed upon him and the lad was told to pull his bonnet over his eyes. He refused, and confronted his murderers with Bible in hand. "I can look you in the face," he said. "I have done nothing of which I need to be ashamed. But how will you look in that day, when you will be judged by what is written in this book?" Then he was shot down and buried among the heather of Eskdale Muir. It was on the very same day in 1685

that Margaret Lachlison and Margaret Wilson were drowned in the tides of the Solway for faithfulness to the Covenanting banner. The one was a widow, the other a young woman of eighteen. What a melting picture is that of the fair maid Margaret tied to a stake on the sands of Wigtown Bay, the cruel crawling foam engulfing her as she sings her death-song from the Psalm-book she loves—

My sins and faults of youth  
Do Thou, O Lord, forget ;  
After Thy mercy think on me,  
And for Thy goodness great.

One of the most interesting documents of these days is "The Children's Bond" of 1683, sworn to by fifteen girls in the village of Pentland. They formed themselves into a praying society, and solemnly entered into a covenant to stand fast by the faith of their fathers. Beatrice Umpherston, whose name heads the list, was then only ten years old. She was afterwards married to a minister, and died in her ninetieth year.

When the youth of Scotland did not fear to die if need be for the truth held so dear, can we wonder at the triumph which crowned such heroic witness-bearing? When things appeared to be at their worst, deliverance came. The succession of James II. to the kingdom was really the means of uniting the nation again in resistance to Popery and absolute power. Moderate men who disapproved of Cameron and the extreme Covenanters could not brook the policy of a King who aimed at reviving the dominion of Rome over the land. So both

in England and Scotland there was an uprising against James, and William of Orange came across from Holland to re-establish the liberties of Church and people that had been well-nigh destroyed by the tyranny of the Stuarts.

James Renwick, a young preacher of twenty-six, was the last martyr of the Covenant to suffer in the Grass-market, on the 17th February 1688. The trials of the Scottish Kirk were not past, but sword and scaffold were never more to threaten her existence. The Bush had been exposed to the hottest fire in all its history, and was not yet consumed.

Dr. Smellie's book deals specially with this period in great picturesqueness of detail. See also James Dodds' *Fifty Years of the Covenanting Struggle* and George Gilfillan's *Covenanters*. For fiction, Scott's *Old Mortality* should be read though with caution in the light of Dr. Thomas M'Crie's criticisms. Galt's *Ringan Gilhaize*, a neglected masterpiece recently reprinted, carries the story onward through three generations from the Reformation to the end of the Covenanting period. Crockett's *Men of the Moss Hags* is a fine story with good local colouring. An old children's classic is Pollok's *Tales of the Covenanters*.

## CHAPTER XV.

### MARROWMEN AND SECEDERS.

THE Revolution of 1689 marks a great era in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism. After a struggle of more than a century in which the power of kings had done its utmost to force some form of Episcopacy on the people, proof was clearly given that the majority of the nation would have none of it. Mild persuasion and stern repression had both alike failed. But what fixed Presbyterian principles in the hearts of Scottish folk more firmly than anything else was the heroic example of the Covenanters. Though many of them were extreme in their opinions and by no means tolerant in their practice, they stood as a whole for freedom against tyranny, for earnest piety against formal profession, and the Revolution was for them a time of deliverance and triumph.

The new King was a Dutch Presbyterian, and it was a fitting thing that a descendant of the noble House of Orange, strong Calvinist and true lover of liberty, should be called by Providence to this work of spiritual

restoration. He was hampered by his English advisers and by the difficulties that a foreigner always has in understanding our peculiarities. Yet he very soon brought about great changes. Bishops and curates disappeared for ever from the national Church of Scotland. The ministers who had been driven forth from their parishes in 1661 were reinstated as far as possible. The persecuting laws were repealed, and the country settled down into a condition of peaceful progress. The General Assembly met again, and William Carstares, a man who had the wisdom of a statesman as well as the courage of a true Christian, stepped to the front as leader. Trusted by the King and enjoying the confidence of his brethren, he became the pilot of the Church through stormy seas into a safe haven. For the calm did not come all at once. There were troublesome questions to settle. The Covenants had been framed for a temporary purpose, and some wanted to make them always binding. Those who now had the upper hand were tempted to persecute the defeated Episcopalians. At least two centuries were to pass before the Presbyterians of Scotland could be welded solidly together on the basis of holding fast the essential matters and agreeing to differ on minor points, without misjudging or attacking those who honestly preferred to worship in other folds.

Carstares lived on till 1715, being four times Moderator of the Kirk, but before then two events had happened which affected the history of the Scottish Church for



good and evil. In 1707 took place the Union of England and Scotland. This meant that while Scotland was confirmed in her Presbyterianism by an oath of the sovereign on accession to the throne, the hope had finally to be given up of making England Presbyterian too, according to the Solemn League and Covenant. The out-and-out Covenanters were not easily reconciled to such a state of things. But the Union was a wise measure, and it worked for the highest benefit of the nation. The same could not be said of the Act of Patronage passed in 1712 by which a British Parliament deprived Scottish Church people of the right to elect their own ministers, putting it into the hands of the nobility and gentry, who often forced upon them pastors whom they did not desire.

This gave rise to much trouble, and there was also excitement over doctrine. Thomas Boston, one of the most pious ministers in the land, chanced to find in the house of one of his parishioners an old book entitled *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. He was much pleased with it, because it set forth very clearly the Gospel of God's Free Grace to all sinful men. Though written many years earlier by an unknown English Puritan, the book seemed to Boston and his friends just what was wanted by the Scotland of that time, and they republished it with a new preface. The ruling powers in the Church did not like the book. They thought its style too bold and popular, being accustomed to the somewhat dry and uninteresting way of presenting the

Gospel that they had learned from the divines of Holland. And some were rather annoyed to see their churches badly attended while crowds flocked to the tent-preachings of the men who favoured the new views. In Presbytery, Synod, and Assembly the "Marrow" was condemned, and the "Marrowmen," as they were called, received very harsh treatment. This they felt all the more as the courts of the Church showed great leniency to ministers who seemed really to have departed from the old faith.

Prominent among these "Marrowmen" was Ebenezer Erskine. He belonged to an ancient Scottish family, and was said to have royal blood in his veins, but his chief fame was as an eloquent preacher and a devoted pastor. For nearly thirty years he had laboured at Portmoak, a small village near the shores of Loch Leven. Then he went to be minister of Stirling, and in October 1732 he delivered in the fair city of Perth at a Synod meeting a sermon which was the starting-point of a new movement in Scottish Presbyterianism. He claimed that the Church of Christ was the freest society in the world, and complained that the right of Christ's people to choose their own pastors was invaded and trodden upon by violent settlements all over the land. This meant throwing down the gauntlet against the policy of the General Assembly, to which it was driven by the law of patronage, and was just the match needed to kindle a fire.

Erskine and three of his friends—William Wilson of

Perth, Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy, and James Fisher of Kinclaven—were summoned before the Assembly and severely censured. Not only so—they were suspended from the exercise of their ministry. But they held together and made up their minds to take a united stand for the truth they held fast. The result was that on 5th December 1733 they met at the lonely wayside inn of Gairney Bridge, near Kinross, and formed themselves into “the Associate Presbytery” in order to continue their work outside the State Church from which they had been expelled.

This was the beginning of the *Secession*. While the working of the Act of Patronage was its main cause, there were other reasons behind it. The spirit of the Covenanters lived on in these men, in their protest against the encroachments of the State and the coldness and indifference that was creeping into the Church. Already the Cameronians had broken off from the Established Kirk because they wished to maintain the Covenants, but the Seceders had a larger programme and a more numerous following. The praying societies that had arisen during the persecutions were the germ of the Seceding congregations; the enthusiastic devotion that had been stirred into life by these gatherings found a natural vent in the organisation set afoot by Erskine and his brethren.

We are not surprised that the Assembly soon repented of its foolish haste in driving these men out of the Church. It did all it could do to induce them to return.

They refused to come back, for they had now found a free platform, and it was for Scotland's ultimate good that they got it. As you rush to-day by express train along one of the notable highways of the world—from Edinburgh to the North by the Forth Bridge—you will see, shortly after crossing that mighty structure, a simple column marking the site of the first Secession Presbytery. The quaint picture of the meeting, still to be seen in many households, suggests a world that has passed away, but it represents a real step in Scotland's progress towards full religious liberty.

Yet we must frankly admit that these worthy pioneers were fettered by the prejudices and bigotries of their age. They might have placed themselves at the head of the wonderful evangelical movement which was now spreading from England across the Border. George Whitefield, who with John Wesley was drawing vast crowds to hear the Gospel, came to Scotland willing to work with the Seceders, but they would not co-operate unless on condition that he signed the Covenants and declined to preach in the pulpits of the Establishment. As he rightly refused to bind himself in that way a great opportunity was lost to the Secession, and about the same time they became seriously divided among themselves.

In those days much was made of the taking of oaths to secure the loyalty of citizens. Every burgess in the chief towns of Scotland was required to declare before God and the judges that he "professed and allowed

with all his heart the true religion presently professed within this realm." Some of the Seceders thought that this meant approval of all the errors and injustices of which they complained in the Church of Scotland; others gave a wider meaning to the phrase and saw no harm in making the declaration as it stood. So over this trivial matter—as we now think—they split into two bodies, known as "Burghers" and "Anti-Burghers," according as they accepted or rejected the Burgess oath. We are inclined to smile now at such scruples, but these men had extremely tender consciences, and the blame lies mostly with the State which caused needless division by coming in and putting a stumbling-block in their way. So keen was the strife that the sections remained apart for more than seventy years, till the State at last abolished the oath that had made all the mischief, and the "breach" was healed.

Thus by the middle of the eighteenth century Scottish Christianity had entered on another period. Henceforth we have to trace two main streams—one connected with the State, one distinct from it—running parallel to each other yet often strongly opposed—working out in strange ways, which we can understand better than our fathers did, the destiny of a common Presbyterianism, and the purpose of God, not for a single country only but for the whole world.

We have reached the region of recent controversy, and it is difficult to suggest books not coloured by bias in favour of the State Church or against it. But it is now possible to look at these events

calmly, giving due credit to both sides. For the Established Church point of view see Dr. Macadam Muir's *History of the Church of Scotland* in the "Guild Series" and Cunningham's larger work. From the Secession standpoint, Professor MacEwen's book on *The Erskines* is admirable. *Elder Logan's Story about the Kirks* is a racy narrative by John Strathesk, a good United Presbyterian, as is also *Stranger than Fiction* by the Rev. John Pollock, now of Belfast.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### MODERATES AND EVANGELICALS.

FOR a hundred years and more (1733-1843) the Church of Scotland was ruled in turn by opposing parties, known as Moderates and Evangelicals.

The Moderates held power for the greater part of that period. They professed to be against all extreme measures and prided themselves on their large views and prudent conduct. But they were most impatient of those who thought differently, especially as to the freedom of the Church and the absolute necessity of God's saving grace in Christ. With a high hand they compelled congregations to accept whatever ministers were imposed upon them by the legal patrons. Soldiers were even employed to force these persons into the pulpits. So you can understand that so long as the Moderates reigned supreme the Seceders had a good chance to rally the people to their side, for they stood up strongly for the rights of the members to elect their own pastors. Then the doctrine they preached, warm and earnest in its tone, was far more like the teaching



of the Reformers and Covenanters than the cold moral essays delivered in many of the parish churches by men who had little real interest in the deep things of religion.

Yet there was always to be found in the Scottish Kirk a strong Evangelical party—ministers and elders and people who believed in the old Evangel, and loved to think and speak of the Death of Jesus on the Cross as the only hope for the world. And just because they trusted in the influence of this Gospel they hated the idea of forcing upon congregations pastors who seemed to be ignorant of it.

Not a few of the Moderates were famous for their ability and learning, notably Dr. William Robertson, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, an eminent historian and leader of the General Assembly for many a day. The champion on the other side was Dr. John Erskine, colleague of Dr. Robertson in the charge of Greyfriars Church. Sir Walter Scott in his story of *Guy Mannering* makes interesting reference to these two divines. Though good friends in private they were sharp antagonists in matters of Church policy. Erskine lived to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and before he died saw signs that the long reign of Moderatism was coming to an end.

A memorable scene took place in the Assembly of 1796. At that time the Churches of Great Britain were gradually awaking to the great duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen. We can scarcely imagine now how any true Christians could be opposed to Foreign

Missions, but in the Assembly there was then a majority, though not a large one, which voted for a motion that it was "improper and absurd to propagate the Gospel abroad while there remained a single individual at home without the means of religious knowledge." During the debate, when a speaker on the Moderate side questioned the authority of the Church to engage in Missions to other lands, Dr. Erskine rose, and in the broad Scots dialect said, "Moderator, rax (reach) me that Bible," and opening the copy of the Scriptures that lay on the table of the Assembly he read out the words of our Lord's commission to His disciples to go with the Gospel to all nations.

Though beaten for the moment the good cause triumphed later on. It was a respected leader of the Moderates, Dr. John Inglis, who some twenty years after carried in the Assembly a proposal to start work in the foreign field, and in 1829 Alexander Duff went forth as the first Scottish missionary to India. Before that date societies had been formed outside the Church to send pioneers to Africa and the East.

Meanwhile a vigorous body of Dissent was growing up in Scotland. In addition to the Seceders, divided into two denominations, a new Church had arisen, called the Relief. Its founder was Thomas Gillespie of Carnock whom the Assembly deposed from the ministry because he refused to take part in a forced settlement at Inverkeithing. This was one of the most tyrannical actions of the Moderates, and in Dunfermline and

other parts of the country large masses of people broke away from the Established Church, seeking relief from the law of Patronage by forming congregations of their own. They differed from the Seceders in some important respects, for they made no question of adhering to the Covenants or of denouncing any form of civil oath, and they allowed free communion with all other Christians, which the Burghers and Anti-Burghers were very slow to permit. So in 1765 there were 120 "meeting-houses" in Scotland, with 100,000 persons worshipping in them. The number rose to 180 by 1773. As a rule they were plain barn-like buildings, but in these times artistic ornament in the house of God was almost regarded as a sin. There was more concern to provide for a faithful and well-trained ministry and to support the ordinances of religion than to rear fine structures and attract by beautiful services. Both within and without the State Church the worship was bald, and severe in its simplicity. The music was rough and unskilled, the prayers and sermons often long and wearisome, the Communion observed usually but once a year, and the habits of the worshippers apt to be careless and irreverent.

But in parish kirk and dissenting meeting-house were to be heard preachers aglow with holy zeal to whom men listened with devout attention. In many a place piety and purity were kept alive by the quiet personal influence radiating from a humble manse or godly peasant home. Robert Burns has given an undying picture of the family

religion of the period in his "Cottar's Saturday Night," though he has also shed lurid light on the abuses that sprang from the open-air Communion observances and from the lax teaching and example of some of the Moderate clergy.

Do we want a striking portrait from this age that will show the stuff of which its true heroes were made? Then look at John Brown, the first in a goodly succession, as depicted in well-chosen words by Principal Fairbairn of Oxford: "The shepherd boy from the braes of Abernethy, who had learned his Latin and his Greek while herding his sheep, surprising, by his ability to read St. John in the original, the St. Andrews professor into the gift of a Greek Testament, becoming Burgher minister of Haddington, a patient pastor 'passing rich on forty pounds a year,' a straight and strenuous preacher for God, a solid scholar amassing in an age of superficial knowledge stores of rare learning, a diligent professor, a quaint humorist, a tender father, potent in life and still more potent in the wealth of a name that has too richly blessed posterity ever to be willingly let die."

Nor was this despised century without its distinct notes of progress in work and worship. The first Sabbath School in Scotland was opened at Brechin by the parish minister in 1760, more than twenty years before the movement of Robert Raikes in England. The General Assembly in 1781 sanctioned a collection of Paraphrases which was really the beginning of the use

of hymns in Presbyterian services, and the Relief Church went so far as in 1794 to issue a hymn-book undisguised.

Men's thoughts were deeply stirred by the French Revolution of 1789, and new interests awoke in both Church and State. The Seceders shook themselves free of bondage to the Covenants, leaving only the remnant of "Auld Lights"<sup>1</sup> to bear witness to a past now largely outgrown. Conscious of the strength that had come to them by their experience in the wilderness, they and their brethren of the Relief boldly proclaimed the doctrine of Voluntaryism—that no church should be established or endowed by the law of the land, and that all religious bodies should be supported only by the free-will offerings of their members. And we shall see in our next chapter how in the old Church of Scotland the new leaven was also working, leading in the first instance to another disruption, but pointing forward through that to larger unions and broader foundations for the great Presbyterian temple.

Dean Stanley in his *History of the Church of Scotland* says the best that can be said for the Moderates, but Principal Rainy's able reply shows much truer insight into the men and the issues of the time.

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<sup>1</sup> The Original Secession Church.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THOMAS CHALMERS AND THE FREE KIRK.

THE Evangelical Revival in the Church of Scotland came about through various causes, but, as in other movements of the kind, the hour produced the man. In this case the man was Thomas Chalmers. He takes rank with Knox, Melville, Henderson, and Carstares among the outstanding personalities, the real makers of Scottish Presbyterianism. We can best tell the story of the Free Kirk—the next great chapter in our record of progress—by connecting it with his name.

Chalmers was a native of the kingdom of Fife, and was born in the seaside town of Anstruther in 1780, one of a family of fourteen. He had rather a hard childhood; the nurse of his infancy treated him cruelly; his parish schoolmaster was more famous as a flogger than an instructor. By his classmates Chalmers was remembered as one of the idlest, strongest, merriest, and most generous-hearted boys in the school. He was quick to learn, and almost as soon as he could form a purpose

he declared that he would be a minister. So when scarcely twelve years of age he entered as a student in St. Andrews University. There his active intellect awoke to life. Mathematics was the study that first attracted him powerfully. He was only fifteen when he became a student of divinity, but many years had to pass before he took any deep personal interest in religion.

In due time we find him settled as parish minister of Kilmany, yet chiefly engrossed in scientific teaching and research. His abilities and tastes seemed to mark him out as the coming Moderate leader of the Kirk. Then he was suddenly led by God into quite a different career. He underwent in 1811 a remarkable spiritual change. The style of his preaching completely altered; he spoke with a new eloquence and fervour, and gave himself whole-heartedly to his work as a pastor of Christ's flock.

Glasgow, which Robert Louis Stevenson, lover of Edinburgh as he was, calls "the chief city of Scottish men," summoned the young apostle to a fruitful field of service. Here he spent perhaps the most strenuous part of his life, holding crowds spellbound by his glowing oratory, organising a wonderful system of provision for the poor, and inspiring many with new ideals of faith and duty. In the General Assembly his voice was now heard as an ardent advocate of popular rights against the waning influence of the Moderates. But to the astonishment of all he retired after eight years of incessant activity to the quiet of a professor's chair in St. Andrews.



He needed a breathing time. Then he accepted a call to the chair of Divinity in Edinburgh University, and was back at the centre of things to be the recognised champion of evangelical principles in the momentous battle now impending.

For we have reached the period of the "Ten Years Conflict" (1833-43). The Law of Patronage, which had been firmly enforced by the State and the Moderate party in the Church for more than a century, was becoming odious to the people. The rising tide of democratic feeling and the deeper sense of religion in men's hearts were breaking strongly against this legal barrier to freedom. So in 1834 the Assembly passed the Veto Act, providing that in cases where the majority in a congregation disapproved of any minister appointed by a patron, the Presbytery should set the proposed settlement aside. They also launched, at the suggestion of Chalmers, a comprehensive scheme of Church extension—for Scotland was growing in population, and the need of more places of worship was very urgent—and gave the right to the ministers of these new charges to sit and vote in the Church courts along with the ministers of the old parishes.

In passing these important measures the evangelical leaders did not think that they were doing anything to upset the balance of Church and State, but the judges and the majority of members of Parliament thought differently, and by a series of decisions made it clear that the State would not allow the Church to have

its own way in these matters. The Veto Act was declared to be illegal, and ministers of the new charges to have no right to sit in the Church courts. The Moderates, who were now fewer in number than the party led by Chalmers, were for yielding to the State on these points, but it was contended on the other side that the sacred truth of Christ's Headship over the Church was at stake and that it must be upheld at all costs. So the Scottish Kirk was rent in twain by bitter strife. Peace might have been arranged if wiser counsels had prevailed in high places, and if English statesmen had seriously set themselves to study the question at issue, but, as things were, there was nothing for it but separation. Freedom then had to be sought outside the State Church, and many, sorely against their will, decided that the venture must be made.

On the 18th May 1843 the General Assembly met in St. Andrew's Church, George Street, Edinburgh. The streets were densely packed with crowds that expected something great to happen. And a great happening it was. The doors opened, and a band of several hundred ministers and elders marched out, Chalmers conspicuous in the front. They walked in orderly procession amid a whirlwind of enthusiasm to Tanfield Hall, the large building that had been prepared for them. There they constituted themselves into the Free Church of Scotland, claiming to carry with them the rights and privileges of the national Kirk. Chalmers, by the general voice, was elected the first Moderator, and Gladstone was not

wrong when he said that the light of that day flashed all through Christendom.

Looking back calmly now on the Disruption, we see in it the crowning instance of what has met us frequently already in our rapid sketch of Scottish Presbyterian history—how the cause of religious liberty has demanded martyrs and has flourished through their sacrifices. Even those who think that such martyrdoms were sometimes mistaken, and might have been prevented if the ruling powers of the State had been wise instead of foolish, must pay due honour to the men who in days of fateful crisis proved true to conviction and to what they believed to be the will of the Church's King and Head.

It was an easy matter to walk in triumphant procession, encouraged by cheering crowds, and to sign the deed of demission in an Assembly of trusted comrades, moved by the joy of a common impulse. The really hard time came in the months that followed, when loved homes had to be left and venerable sanctuaries abandoned at the call of conscience. But Thomas Chalmers and the other leaders of this new exodus had fully counted the cost and were ready with great schemes to meet the emergency. By the Sustentation Fund ample means were provided for the support of the ministers and their families; new manses were built; new colleges were reared for the training of students. Chalmers lived only four years after the formation of the Free Church, yet long enough to see the vessel of his devising

fairly launched on her voyage and in charge of faithful pilots who bore her safely through the billows ahead.

There was difficulty at first in getting sites for the new congregations, but gradually the land was dotted with Free kirks almost as numerous as those of the Establishment. On every hand an extraordinary spirit of enterprise showed itself, and behind it all was the glow of religious revival. People gave because their hearts compelled them. Though Scotland was a poor country in 1843, not half so wealthy as now, it revealed surprising riches of liberality. From the first the Free Church was a missionary Church, caring for the masses of the godless and indifferent at home, and giving herself gladly to the task of spreading the Gospel abroad.

The standard of the early days rose ever higher. Chalmers spoke of the freewill offerings coming in "like a set rain at the rate of £1000 a day." They poured in fifty years later to the tune of more than £2000, and the record by 1900 had reached a total of over 30 millions sterling.

The number of churches was also doubled, growing from 500 to 1100, notwithstanding the powerful rivalry of other denominations. We who are inclined to bewail the falling off that in many ways has marked the beginning of the new century should not forget the almost feverish progress of the previous time.

But the Free Church was far more than a successful organisation. She proved herself to be a nursery of

Christian zeal, and a famous school of sacred scholarship. More permanent than her treasures of money were the treasures of men she gave to the world. We can mention only a few:—

Candlish gained renown as a master in debate and an able preacher of the Word. Guthrie won all hearts by his pathos in the pulpit, his fervent philanthropy, and his friendship for the ragged children. Buchanan was an accomplished Church-statesman and a skilful financier. Cunningham excelled as a strong thinker and learned theologian. Hugh Miller was at once brilliant scientist and notable journalist. Duff of Calcutta, Stewart of Lovedale, Ion Keith-Falconer of Aden were names of high honour in the mission field. Davidson and Bruce, Marcus Dods and Robertson Smith led the movement of advance in modern Bible study. Walter Smith beautifully combined the gifts of poet and divine. Andrew Bonar, saintly worker, and his brother Horatius, hymn-writer of the universal Church, will not soon be forgotten. Henry Drummond was the shining apostle of a new kind of evangelism. Last, not least, Robert Rainy, master-guide of his Church through many a controversy, lived to lead her into wider paths of which we do not yet see the end.

Others, happily still with us, we need not name. To few Presbyterian denominations has it been given in so brief a career to leave so rich a legacy. The Free Church of Scotland did not bear that title long, but she bore it nobly. The change of her name in 1900 meant

only that she added the badge of unity to that of liberty.

Dr. Hanna's *Life of Chalmers* is a great biography, too little read nowadays. There are shorter lives by Dr. Blaikie, W. Scott Leask, and Mrs. Oliphant. Dr. Thomas Brown's *Annals of the Disruption* is a treasury of interesting information as to that stirring time. Dr. C. G. M'Crie has told the story of the Free Church in a Bible Class primer, and Dr. Norman Walker's *Chapters from the History of the Free Church of Scotland* (Chalmers Lectures) are the nearest attempt at a complete record. John Strathesk's *Bits from Blinkbonny* is a good story of Disruption times.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### NORMAN MACLEOD AND THE AULD KIRK.

THE Auld Kirk of Scotland—as she came familiarly to be called, in contrast with the offshoots from the parent stem—suffered a heavy blow on the day of the Disruption: 451 of her best ministers had gone forth from her midst; her resources were seriously crippled; her power for good greatly weakened. True, there were still 752 clergy who adhered to her, the parish kirks and manses were all in her possession, and the State continued to recognise her as the national Church. But she had to face in every part of Scotland the strong opposition of a new denomination, claiming to be the real heir to the glories of her past. There were earnest and faithful men who did not see their way to follow Dr. Chalmers and the rest to Tanfield Hall. They were hampered, however, by the dead weight of those who had refused for merely worldly reasons to make the great surrender, and before them lay the difficult task of reconstructing their Church on almost new foundations.



Prominent among these rebuilders of the Auld Kirk was James Robertson of Ellon, afterwards a professor in Edinburgh University. He had been the ablest opponent of the Free Church policy, and though he took his stand with the Moderate party, his spirit was truly evangelical, and he was deeply concerned about the highest welfare of his country. So he set himself to carry out a plan for the erection and endowment of additional parish churches in the most populous parts of the land, relying not on State aid, but on the voluntary gifts of the people. When he died, in 1861, a sum of half a million sterling had been collected, and sixty new parishes formed. The result may have been that Scotland in these years was crowded with too many places of worship, but it showed, at anyrate, that the free-will offerings of Christian folk could work wonders in the way of providing religious ordinances both within and without the State Church.

Gradually the Kirk began to recover from the shock that had threatened to overwhelm her. Among the outstanding personalities who helped to make her a living power again, we must reckon Dr. Norman Macleod as perhaps the chief.

He was born at Campbeltown in 1812, of good Highland stock, "inhaling in his childhood the aroma of an olden time." The islands, the glens, the passionate romance of his ancestors, fired his young imagination. He loved the sea and sailors; he combined with a simple piety an enthusiasm for nature, and a wide outlook on the world. As a boy, he was affectionate

and bright, fond of stories and talk. At college he did not greatly distinguish himself, but he was one of the many Scottish youth who came under the spell of Thomas Chalmers' teaching. The death of a young brother impressed him at a critical time, and marked for him the commencement of a devoted Christian life. On completing his studies, he was settled as minister of Loudon, in Ayrshire, in 1838. Five years later came the Disruption, and he seems never to have doubted that it was his duty to remain in the Established Kirk. From his country parish he was translated to Dalkeith, and then, in 1851, to the Barony, Glasgow.

Here for more than twenty years he exerted a wonderful influence as a man, a pastor, a preacher, and a writer. His people spoke of him as "our Norman"; his eloquent words swayed the public mind; Queen Victoria, no less than the humblest working man, felt the touch of his sympathetic heart; his writings, too, did much to spread his influence. In days when healthy and popular Christian literature was scarcer than now, *Good Words*, the monthly periodical which he edited, came as a boon and a blessing to multitudes. He was one of the first to provide high-class reading for the young, and his tales, *The Old Lieutenant and his Son* and *Wee Davie*, became classics of their kind. Ardent and outspoken, he sometimes ran rather violently against the time-honoured prejudices of his countrymen, and in his lifetime was considered by many too broad in his views. "I would be broad," he said once, "as the charity of Almighty

God, but narrow as His righteousness." He did splendid service for Foreign Missions, undertaking a journey to India which caused a breakdown in his health, and led to his comparatively early death in 1872. His statue rises in Glasgow between the Cathedral and the Barony Kirk, in the midst of the busy city he loved so well and served so untiringly ; his manly soul still cheers us onward as we sing his rousing hymn :—

Courage, brother ! do not stumble,  
Though thy path be dark as night ;  
There's a star to guide the humble ;—  
Trust in God and do the right.

Less than two years after Norman Macleod's death, his Church took a step which was at once a confession of mistake in the past and the beginning of an effort to come into line again with those who had broken away from her on conscientious grounds. There can be no doubt that the Law of Patronage was the main cause of the Secession, the Relief, and the Disruption. The Church of Scotland was now convinced that the time had come for the repeal of that law, and, at her request, Parliament in 1874 swept it off the statute-book. This did not appear at first to make much difference in the situation. The congregations of the Auld Kirk were now free to elect their own ministers under certain restrictions, but the Free and U.P. Churches were not disposed to leave the independent position to which they had become accustomed in order

to come under even a modified State control. They regarded the abolition of patronage as a political move aimed against them, and commenced as a counterblast a vigorous agitation for Disestablishment—the entire separation of the Church from the State. It looked for a while as if this agitation was going to be successful, but other questions arose to occupy the minds of statesmen and people, and the strife, which caused a good deal of ill-will, fell into the background.

Other changes were at work within the Church of Scotland. She took the lead of the Presbyterian bodies in the improvement of worship. Organs, after a stiff battle, were permitted, and even read prayers began to be introduced, notwithstanding much opposition. The pioneer in these matters was Dr. Robert Lee, of Greyfriars, Edinburgh. A “Church Service Society” was formed to promote greater dignity and reverence in public devotion. More attention was given to beauty of church architecture, and several of the old cathedrals were restored to something like their original grandeur.

The doctrine of the Church also became broader. Macleod, though in sympathy with this tendency, was not much of a theologian. It took more distinct shape in such men as Caird, Story, and Tulloch. John Caird was a famous preacher who rose to be Principal of Glasgow University. Story, who succeeded him in that office, was a clever and sharp-tongued debater. Tulloch, who held a leading place in St. Andrews, was an accomplished literary man and an impressive speaker in Church

courts. Chiefly through the influence of these divines the bonds of adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith were gradually relaxed.

Another spirit, however, showed itself in the Church, and to-day it seems to be the stronger. Professor Robert Flint did a notable work in refuting current forms of unbelief, and in re-establishing the evangelical faith on a solid basis. The task he began has been successfully carried on by younger men. Then a real revival came through the efforts of Dr. A. H. Charteris, in organising new schemes of Christian life and work, including Guilds for Young Men and Women, and an order of deaconesses. There has also been a manifest increase of zeal for the spread of the Gospel abroad, particularly in Central Africa and India.

So the record of the Church of Scotland since 1843 has been one of spiritual recovery and steady progress. At present her parish churches number between fourteen and fifteen hundred, her members over seven hundred thousand. While the causes that divide her from the other branches of the Presbyterian family within her borders still remain, they are no longer acute and embittering, and strong efforts are being made to remove them. The old irreconcilable antagonism is gone, and every one is ready to admit that each branch has had its own special witness to bear to important aspects of Christ's Truth. Even the fires kindled in the heart of the Bush have not consumed it. They may have made it burn with a richer and ruddier glow.

See *A Faithful Churchman*, a sketch of the life of Dr. Robertson, by Charteris, his great disciple, in the Guild Series of handbooks. The *Life of Dr. Charteris*, published 1912, is very valuable for the later history.

Dr. Norman Macleod's biography by his brother is a standard book, and very interesting. It ought to be reprinted in a cheap edition. There is a shorter life, by John Wellwood, in the "Famous Scots" Series.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### JOHN CAIRNS AND THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN KIRK.

WE must now go back to follow the third main stream of Scottish Presbyterianism, which, beginning at Gairney Bridge, ran through the various currents of Burgher, Anti-Burgher, and Relief into the broad river of the United Presbyterian Church.

After the Burghers and Anti-Burghers joined hands in 1820, the Seceders, from whom the "Auld Lights" continued to keep separate, formed a strong compact body. They were, however, troubled a good deal with controversy over the doctrine of our Lord's Atonement, a subject that also exercised the Established Church at this time. There was great disputing as to whether Christ died for all mankind or for the elect only, and we cannot but regret now that able and pious men like John Macleod Campbell, minister of the parish of Row, and James Morison, who was called to be pastor of a Secession Church in Kilmarnock, were expelled from the Presbyterian fold for holding wide views of the



Gospel that would be freely allowed to-day in our pulpits. But in those days even the least departure from the Westminster Confession of Faith was regarded as serious error. One consequence of the treatment of Morison by the Seceders was the founding in 1844 of a new denomination, known as the Evangelical Union, which lasted for a little over fifty years, and was then merged in the Congregational Church.

Meanwhile the Relief was drawing closer to the Secession, and the movement towards union was hastened by the Disruption of 1843. As these two bodies held to the same doctrine and government, and bore the same testimony in favour of the voluntary support of religion, there was really no reason why they should not come together. Tanfield Hall, which welcomed the first General Assembly of the Free Church, was the scene four years later of a happy union. The "U.P.'s" as they came to be called—for United Presbyterian, their full title, was a long name to use—won an honourable record for themselves during the remaining years of the nineteenth century. They began with 518 congregations, as many as the Free Church of that day.

If there is a name more than any other to be linked with the United Presbyterian Church, it is that of John Cairns, the herd boy who rose to be one of Scotland's greatest scholars and divines. Born in 1818 of poor and godly parents, his father a Berwickshire shepherd who reared a family of eight children in a single-roomed

cottage, he was brought up in the purest principles of the Secession. At school he revealed the habit that clung to him all his life—an eager thirst for learning, a desire to read everything of value that came in his way. Yet he was a healthy, hearty boy, keen in games as in study. At thirteen we see him in the fields, watching his sheep during the day, devoting his spare hours to his books, walking three nights a week to his old teacher to rehearse what he had learned. So he grew up, strong in limb, big in brain, steadfast in soul, “a choice young man,” destined to be a spiritual king of his fellows. All the influences of home, school, Church, and natural disposition pointed him onward to the Christian ministry as his goal. He went to Edinburgh, where his mind and heart became more and more set on the highest things. In the intervals of study he gave himself to teaching. When only seventeen he taught a class of 150 children; thoroughness was a keynote of all his work.

At last, laden with honours from the University, the foremost student of his time in classics and philosophy, he lays all his talents at the feet of Christ, and after the usual course of special preparation in the Secession Hall, a winter at Berlin, and a tramp to Rome and back, is ordained pastor at Berwick-on-Tweed. There for more than thirty years, on the border line of two countries, he stood by his post. With eye ever intent on the world-progress of God’s kingdom, yet with a near view for his own Church and the Scotland he passionately loved, he laboured with unflagging zeal and growing reputation.

Not even for the dazzling prize of the principalship of Edinburgh University could he be turned aside from his chosen sphere as a Christian minister; it was his joy to preach to large congregations all over the land, to guide and inspire the counsels of his denomination, in due time also to bear his part as a professor in training young men for sacred office. Only when the Theological College of the United Presbyterian Church was placed on a footing that required the whole time of its teachers to be devoted to the work, did he consent to leave Berwick for Edinburgh. There at the age of seventy-four he died—a great, humble man of God, his greatness not fully realised till he was gone. His last words—“You go first, I follow”—were typical of his life, ever forgetting himself in the service of his fellows, distrustful to a fault of his own powers, wholly devoted to the cause of Jesus Christ in his day and generation.

The first great movement in the United Presbyterian Church with which Cairns was closely connected was that for union with the Free Church. For ten years, 1863–73, it proceeded with more or less hopefulness. The best men on both sides were strongly in its favour, but the time was not ripe. Cairns was deeply disappointed at the temporary failure, and he passed away before the project was revived. Yet his powerful advocacy had much to do with its final success.

In many respects the United Presbyterians were pioneers of larger views of truth and duty. Less fettered than the Established and Free Churches to old

usages and ways of thinking, they struck out lines of their own which showed the path of progress to others. This was especially the case with regard to the Confession of Faith, the creed binding upon all the Scottish Churches. The Established Church could not easily alter its relation to the Confession, for that was determined by Act of Parliament ; the Free Church was at first unwilling to touch a question that seemed to affect its orthodoxy ; the United Presbyterian Church was bold enough in 1879 to grasp the nettle by passing a Declaratory Act to relieve tender consciences, allowing liberty of opinion on matters not entering into the substance of the faith. Cairns was not a leader in this new departure, but he did much to give it wise direction. He was a very zealous champion of Disestablishment, for he believed most strongly in the separation of the Church from the State for the good of both, but there was never any trace of bitterness in his arguments. The United Presbyterian Church all through its history bore consistent testimony on this point.

Another cause dear to the heart of John Cairns was that of Temperance. At Berwick he became a total abstainer for the good of his flock, and he went even so far as to join the Good Templars by way of example. There is nothing more touching in his life than the sight of this great man humbling himself to the level of poorer and weaker brethren by his self-sacrificing devotion to a cause that was much less popular then than now. And there were other stalwarts in the United Presbyterian

Church who led the van in this movement which has done so much to deliver Scotland from a national curse.

In no respect had this Church a worthier record than in her efforts on behalf of Foreign Missions. The Seceders broke ground in the West Indies, South Africa, and Old Calabar; the Relief, in Kaffraria. After the union of 1847, the work was extended, first to India, then to Manchuria. Some of Cairns's grandest sermons were preached in the interests of the spread of the Gospel to all lands, and the enthusiastic missionary meetings held on Synod Wednesday evenings are among the most treasured memories of old United Presbyterians. A crown was placed on this fine enterprise when, at the Jubilee Synod of 1897, native ministers were present from all the mission fields to rejoice with the home Church in her joy.

We must, however, pay a brief tribute to other names that have made the United Presbyterian Kirk illustrious. The Brown family, which shed such glory on the Secession, prolonged its fame into the larger body. Dr. John Brown, of Broughton Place, Edinburgh, whose life was written by Cairns, was a master of Scriptural exposition; his still more gifted son of the same name, the beloved physician to whom we owe *Rab and his Friends* and other exquisite sketches, has in a letter addressed to Cairns, who was one of his dearest friends—he called him a great, big, evangelical Newfoundland dog—vividly depicted the scenes and characters of old

Seceding days. John Eadie was another noted Biblical scholar, chosen to be one of the revisers of the New Testament. In John Ker the Church remembers a noble preacher and a man of rare spiritual genius. William Robertson of Irvine was a true poet of mystic insight and eloquent tongue. Henry Calderwood did much to impress his generation as a University teacher and a Christian man of affairs. George Clark Hutton was a keen and uncompromising fighter for Voluntarism against all opponents. These men and such-like gave a peculiar character and distinction to the United Presbyterian Church even beyond Scotland. For indeed one of the features of this body was its outlook farther than the limits of the small country in which its main work lay. Not only by its extensive Foreign Missions, but by its attempts to obtain an influence in England, Ireland, and the Colonies, it helped to redeem Presbyterianism from the reproach of local narrowness.

But when the Jubilee Year arrived in 1897, it was evident that another stage was approaching in the reunion of Scottish Christendom. At no previous period of her history was the United Presbyterian Church stronger in numbers, in resources, in adherence to the principles that had made her what she was. We have now to see how in obedience to the call of Christian duty she did not hesitate to make sacrifice of her separate existence for the greater good of Scotland and of the world.

No complete history of the United Presbyterian Church has been written. The *Handbook of its History and Principles*, written by Dr. William Blair in 1890, is a useful if slight book. A Jubilee Memorial volume was issued in 1897.

Professor MacEwen's *Life of Cairns* is a really first-rate biography, masterly in its revelation of the man and his time. But the little life of his uncle in the "Famous Scots" Series, by the Rev. John Cairns of Dumfries, is also exceedingly well done. Dr. James Brown of Paisley, another notable United Presbyterian, is the author of three biographies,—of Thomas Davidson "The Scottish Probationer," Eadie, and Robertson—that are all admirable in their way, and together give a striking picture of the more literary side of the United Presbyterian Church.



## CHAPTER XX.

### UNION IN SCOTLAND.

THOUGH the nineteenth century saw the greatest breach in Presbyterian unity of all Scottish history, it witnessed also quite a series of unions which culminated in the event of 1900. Burgher and Anti-Burgher came together in 1820, Secession and Relief in 1847, the Free Church and the Original Secession in 1852, the Free Church and the Reformed Presbyterian in 1876.

All this showed that the spirit of division which was strong in the previous century was at last being counteracted by the spirit of Christian brotherhood. We are not to think that these divisions were always unnecessary. In the circumstances of the time, separation was sometimes the only way to secure free action and free speech. Toleration of different opinions within the same Church was not readily allowed, and new denominations had to come into existence to bear witness to certain sides of truth that did not get fair play. The State, too, was often found to be a very hard master of the Church.

But after a while thoughtful people came to see that many of the questions that had troubled their fathers had either been settled, or were no longer worth fighting about. They felt that those who held in the main the same views in religious matters ought to be united in one body, with liberty to think and act on minor points according to conscience.

The union of Churches is, however, a slow business, and has to come about by degrees. In the case of large bodies, there has to be much conference and debate before agreement can be reached. The Free and United Presbyterian Churches were very like each other, and there seemed little reason why they should not become one without much ado; yet there were difficulties that prevented their union for many years, and caused no slight mischief after the union took place. At first the Free Church stood up strongly for the principle of the establishment of religion by the State, while the United Presbyterians were just as strong in contending against that idea. Organs were forbidden in the one denomination, and more favourably regarded in the other. The Confession of Faith was very rigidly adhered to in the Free Church when the United Presbyterian Church began to allow liberty in interpreting it. But gradually these differences disappeared.

Both Churches came to hold much the same opinions as to the relation of religion to the State. Instrumental music was no longer discouraged by either. Broader views as to the Bible and Christian doctrine spread very

rapidly. A "Declaratory Act" in almost identical terms gave freedom in the two denominations from strict bondage to the Westminster standards. Such things did not happen in the Free Church without opposition on the part of those, especially in the Highlands, who stood firmly by the old ways, and there was a secession of a few ministers and elders, leading to the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church. The objections of others seemed to be silenced, and, after the Jubilee of the Free Church in 1893 and of the United Presbyterian Church in 1897, the way was felt to be clear for a speedy union.

The United Presbyterian Synod was perfectly unanimous, and when the last vote was taken in the Free Assembly the numbers were 643 for the Union and 27 against. So on 1st November 1900 the Waverley Market in Edinburgh was the scene of an historic gathering. On that morning, in pouring rain, the representatives of the two Churches marched in procession along Princes Street, and a vast crowd filled the spacious meeting-place to rejoice over the happy consummation. None then present will forget the impressive singing of Psalm 133:—

Behold, how good a thing it is,  
And how becoming well,  
Together such as brethren are  
In unity to dwell!

The most dramatic moment was the hand-grasp of the two Moderators, symbolising the marriage of the Churches. Principal Rainy, who had done more than

any other man to promote the union, was called by acclamation to the chair of the United Assembly, and a spirit of devout enthusiasm and hope filled all hearts. In the evening, delegates from the chief Protestant Churches of Christendom spoke stirring words of congratulation.

It was a Church imposing in numbers and influence that was thus constituted. The United Free Church of Scotland, as it was called, could boast of over seventeen hundred ministers and congregations, and about half a million members. Only a little cloud dimmed the horizon. The remnant that opposed the union to the last persisted in meeting in the Free Assembly Hall, and on being ejected from it they put forth a claim to be the sole representatives of the Free Church, and to have the right to possess all its money and property. Legal proceedings followed; but few people believed that any harm would come. The Court of Session, Scotland's supreme judicial body, dismissed the plea of the "Wee Frees," as they were popularly named. Appeal was then made to the House of Lords, and it was a surprise to the world when on an August day in 1904, nearly four years after the union, their extraordinary decision was published. For the highest court in the land decreed, by a majority, that the Free Church had been untrue to the principles of her foundation by entering into union with the United Presbyterians: therefore that her buildings and endowments must be given up to the small band of objectors.

Such a heavy penalty for obeying the call of Christ to unity had never been exacted of any Church, and the shock was tremendous. But the United Church rose bravely to the occasion. At a memorable convocation held in Edinburgh, the resolution was taken to face all consequences rather than consent to coercion of the Church by the State, to regard the union as an accomplished fact not to be undone by a legal decision, and to strive by every possible means to secure again for the united body its rightful possessions.

It was soon clear that the judgment of the Lords could not be carried out. The legal Free Church was utterly unable to fulfil the trust so strangely assigned. Her attempts to do so only aroused a storm of ridicule. Still the inconvenience and the loss were great. Deprived for a while of her halls and colleges, many of her congregations expelled from their buildings, the flow of her central funds stopped at the fountainhead, the United Free Church was in a grievous plight, and Parliament was forced to step in to redress the flagrant wrong. A Commission was appointed to deal with the perplexing situation, and in due time it succeeded in bringing something like order out of chaos. The bulk of her lost property was restored to the Church of the Union, while the Free Church, confirmed in her claim to the old title, had to be content with a generous provision to meet her limited needs.

The Union of 1900 was thus sealed by a very costly sacrifice, and to all human appearance the blow brought

about by the crisis of 1904 was likely to damage the promising movement for closer unity among Christ's people throughout the world. Instead of that it had quite the opposite effect, and in this we cannot fail to see a remarkable leading of Providence. In the first place, the United Church became more solidly and enthusiastically one, its elements fused in the fires of affliction. The United Presbyterians were not touched by the House of Lords' judgment, but they did not dream for a moment of withdrawing from the union. In the second place, other Churches profited by the disaster, and were more careful in looking to the legal conditions of union, as in the case of the English Methodist bodies that came together in 1907. Thirdly, and most striking of all, the heart of Scotland was touched as it had not been by the union itself. The voice of denominational rivalry was hushed into silence. Leaders in the Established Church showed a genuine sympathy with the sister-Church in her distress, and came to her assistance in many ways.

Men began to ask—Why should we not work and pray for a larger union? Already there had been agreement as to a common Presbyterian hymn-book, and the way seemed to point to a much closer co-operation. In face of the altered circumstances of Church and nation, the old battle-cries had largely lost their power. So when the General Assembly of the Established Church suggested to the United Free Assembly meeting on the other side of the street that perhaps the day had arrived for a

frank discussion of the causes of separation, they met with a prompt response, expressing willingness to enter on free and unrestricted conference on the questions at issue.

In 1909 committees of the two Churches found themselves face to face in friendly conversation, and a new chapter was opened in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism which may not be written quickly, but is being written patiently and surely in an atmosphere of hope and better mutual understanding.

Scotland's Reformed Kirk has been the scene of sore contentings for three hundred and fifty years. She appears now to be entering on a period of peace during which the fruit of these struggles will be quietly reaped. But it must not be forgotten that all through the days of strife and division the ideal of one great free Presbyterian Church floated before the minds of the heroes, saints, and martyrs whose memory we revere. In our building for the future, room has to be found for every true thought they expressed, every high principle of life and duty that they blazoned on their fighting banners. The task is no easy one, but valiant hearts, especially of the younger generation, may well brace themselves to the noble endeavour, knowing that it is an effort supremely worthy of them as patriots and as Christians.

This chapter deals with matters too recent for detailed reference. The best account of the Union of 1900 and of the crisis that followed is in *The Life of Principal Rainy*, by Dr. Carnegie Simpson. The *Report of the Joint-Committee on Union*, published in 1912, gives a good general view of the later situation. But each succeeding year marks real progress towards the larger union in prospect.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE STALWARTS OF ULSTER.

IRELAND has had a religious connection with Scotland from the earliest times, which is not surprising when we remember how close the northern part of "the emerald isle" is to the Scottish coast. Saint Patrick, the apostle of Ireland whom Protestants and Roman Catholics alike regard with veneration, came, according to the opinion of most scholars, from a village near the Clyde, and, as if in repayment of the debt, Saint Columba sailed from the shores of Donegal to establish a missionary centre at Iona, destined to be "the luminary of the Caledonian regions." A thousand years later, Scotland, now doing pioneer work for the Reformed Faith, sent some of her best sons over to Ulster to plant there as stalwart a Church as can be found anywhere in Christendom.

There was need for such an outpost in a land that remained faithful to the Pope when all the rest of the United Kingdom had broken off from Rome. Most

of the Irish folk, forced into subjection to the too often brutal power of Great Britain, asserted their independence in matters of religion, and so refused to follow their conquerors in the way of the Reformation. Had they done so they would have won their freedom sooner, and many a lurid page that has stained the nation's records would not have been written. But God willed it otherwise, and while the strife of Protestant and Romanist in Ireland is one of the saddest things in history, we must be thankful for the Burning of the Bush that kept the pure flame of truth alive through days of darkness, to shine more clearly in happier and more peaceful times.

Just after James I. ascended the throne of England, the British Government had to face a difficult problem. A formidable Irish rebellion had been overcome, and the defeated Earls of the North had fled to the Continent. Their extensive lands were forfeited to the Crown, but what was to be done with them? It was not safe to leave them in possession of the disaffected natives. A plan was therefore devised to bring Protestant settlers over from England and Scotland to hold and cultivate the country. Scotland being nearest, and her people always having more of the emigrant spirit than the English, the response was heartier from that quarter. As staunch Presbyterians felt themselves hard pressed at home by the persecution of the Stuart kings, they were the more willing to venture across the channel, where they might hope for greater liberty and

have the chance of doing some Protestant spade-work in a fertile and promising soil.

So there came about what is known as the Plantation of Ulster. At first the Episcopalians, who were established by England's authority as the State Church of Ireland, were disposed to welcome the new settlers though not quite of their own way of thinking. James Ussher, then Archbishop of Armagh, was a liberal-minded man, and he went so far as to admit Presbyterian ministers from Scotland to charges in the Episcopal Church. This, however, did not last long, for Laud, who had declared war against Presbyterianism in Great Britain, was not inclined to tolerate any form of it in Ireland. In Wentworth, Earl of Stratford, with his policy of "Thorough," he found a ready instrument to carry out his views. The Presbyterian ministers were ejected from their parishes and driven back to Scotland. It seemed as if the hopeful attempt to plant the Church of the Covenant in Ireland was to fail utterly. But time soon brought round a change. The horrors of another Irish rebellion in 1641, when Protestants were cruelly massacred by Roman Catholics, stirred up the Covenanting leaders to send an army to the relief of the suffering colonists, and being victorious, they were determined to allow no Episcopal interference with the rights of conscience. On 1st June 1642 a Presbytery consisting of five ministers and four ruling elders was formed at Carrickfergus on Belfast Lough. This was the real birthday of the Irish Presbyterian Church. So

rapid was its growth that in 1660 there were 60 congregations in Ulster, 70 ministers, 5 Presbyteries, and 100,000 communicants.

Like their brethren in Scotland the Irish Presbyterians did not approve of Oliver Cromwell's rule, and held to Charles II. as their lawful king. And they too had to suffer for their mistaken loyalty to that unworthy monarch. There was violent persecution again in Ireland. Ministers were once more driven from their charges, bishops taking an active part in suppressing the Presbyterian form of worship. Yet here, too, there were "blinks," and during one of these Charles actually granted a State endowment, known as the Regium Donum, *i.e.* the King's Gift, to the ministers. Though it was withdrawn after a while it was increased and regularly paid under William III. and his successors, continuing till the Irish Episcopal Church was disestablished in 1869 and all State support of religion came to an end.

The Revolution of 1688-89 was marked by a tremendous struggle in Ireland. Here King James II. made his last stand, for he thought that in a country the most of whose inhabitants were Roman Catholics like himself, he would be able to hold out as in a stronghold against the Protestants of England and Scotland, and in the end succeed in winning back his crown. So the Presbyterians of Ireland were in deadly peril, and their very existence was at stake. Therefore we are not surprised that they hailed William of Orange

with rapture as their champion, and that to this day they honour him as the man above all others who accomplished their final deliverance. The defence of Derry was a splendid feat of heroism, the brave citizens manning the walls successfully for 105 days against the attack of James's army. Though the fame of George Walker, the Episcopal clergyman who acted as assistant governor, has rather cast into the shade the service rendered by others, it should not be forgotten that it was James Gordon, a Presbyterian minister, who counselled the shutting of the gates and stirred up Kirke to relieve the garrison, and that most of the apprentice boys and the majority of those who stood behind the ramparts were stout Presbyterians. The battle of the Boyne on 1st July 1690 was the death-blow to James's hopes, and since that time there has been no real danger of Ireland falling a prey to the persecuting power of Rome.

The Episcopal Church being, as we have seen, established by law was under temptation to behave tyrannically towards other Christians, and now that the common foe was vanquished, the old spirit showed itself again. A Test Act was passed in 1704 which compelled every person holding a position under the Crown to partake of the Communion in an Episcopal Church within three months after entering on office. This unjust law bore heavily on Presbyterians as well as Roman Catholics, and led to many emigrating to America. So that while freedom was secured in much greater measure by their

fellow-religionists in England and Scotland, the Presbyterians of Ireland had to wait a longer time for redress. The *Regium Donum* was a bad substitute for depriving them of their just rights ; it was like giving a poor man a dole of charity in order to keep him quiet.

In the eighteenth century the wave of Moderatism which chilled the Scottish Church and the Presbyterians of England had also a deadening effect in Ireland. There arose in the Irish Presbyterian Church a "New Light" party which objected to the signing of any definite evangelical creed, and went so far as to deny the supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ. This was further than even the Scottish Moderates went, and it looked for a while as if the Presbyterians of Ireland were falling away altogether from the old faith. The danger was averted by two circumstances — the coming of the Seceders, and the rise of a great orthodox leader.

The Seceders of Scotland, who always had a shrewd outlook beyond their own country, were not long in sending ministers to Ireland. As their preaching had more Gospel warmth in it than that which was heard from many pulpits in the Ulster Synod, they were welcomed in numerous places, and gradually built up a strong denomination. Then in Henry Cooke the original Irish Presbyterians found a strenuous upholder of the essential truths of Christianity. Just as in the fourth century Athanasius triumphed over Arianism, and so saved the early Church from serious heresy, Cooke by his eloquence and zeal fought against a similar tendency

in the north of Ireland and succeeded in bringing his Church back to the paths of sound doctrine. A union took place between the Ulster Synod and the Seceders in 1841, and this strengthened the orthodox feeling.

The Irish Presbyterian Church is distinguished in the Presbyterian family for its staunch adherence to time-honoured belief and practice. When other Churches have been relaxing their bondage to the Westminster Confession of Faith, this Church does not seem to have felt any grievance. It has had battles over hymns and organs that are scarcely past, though both are now tolerated. Forced as it is into constant conflict with Romanism in a country where that is still a living and aggressive form of religion, it has been led to take an uncompromising stand on questions that do not now disturb other branches of the Presbyterian communion. But with a vigour and enterprise all its own it is facing the problems of to-day in a most important field. The magnificent Assembly Hall in Belfast is a symbol of its dominating position in that thriving community, nor is it neglectful of the needs of the distressed masses.

Temperance work is carried on with much success, the "Catch my pal" movement, organised by one of the younger ministers, having of late made many converts to sobriety in a land cursed by the drink evil.

It is still in Ulster that the main strength of Irish Presbyterianism lies. Few will deny that the grit and godly perseverance of the Scottish settlers and their descendants are the chief cause of that province's



prosperity. Yet the Church seeks to fulfil a mission to the whole of Ireland. In Dublin, Cork, and other centres of the South it has no little influence, while it strives without controversial bitterness to spread the Evangel in the more benighted rural regions. The General Assembly now includes 562 congregations with 104,894 members in its reckoning. Whatever may be the changes of the future in the religious and political ordering of Ireland, it is safe to predict that this historic Church will maintain for herself an honourable place and win a yet higher degree. The fires of four centuries have not consumed her glowing testimony. She must burn all the brighter through the coming time.

There is an excellent *History of the First Presbyterian Church* by Thomas Hamilton, D.D., in T. & T. Clark's series of Bible Class handbooks (second edition, 1897). More recent, and specially prepared for the Young People's Guild of the Church, is *The History and Principles of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, by Rev. D. Stewart, B.A., Belfast.

Good stories of the Siege of Derry are *A Man's Foes*, by E. H. Strain, and *The Crimson Sign*, by Sir S. R. Keightley.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### PRESBYTERIANS IN ENGLAND.

KINGS and Queens had much more to do with the shaping of the Reformation in England than in Scotland or in Europe generally. The Presbyterian system, with the stress it laid on the rights of the Christian people, did not commend itself to monarchs like Henry VIII., Elizabeth, or James I., who wanted to have their own way in religion as in other matters. Henry was proud of the title "Defender of the Faith" that the Pope gave him, and even after his quarrel with Rome he liked to be regarded as head of the Church, compelling bishops, clergy, and laity to think as he pleased. When a young Protestant king came to the throne in Edward VI. it did seem for a while as if more freedom was to be allowed. John à Lasco, a reformer from Poland, got a charter for a "Church of the Strangers" in London which was really organised after Calvin's Geneva plan. John Knox preached for two years in Newcastle-on-Tyne and was appointed a royal chaplain. He took part in preparing the English Prayer

Book, and was actually offered a bishopric. Though he did not see his way to accept this office, it is pretty certain that if Edward VI. had lived longer, Presbyterian ministers would have had a settled place in the Reformed Church of England. But after his early death came the persecution under Mary; then Elizabeth, like her father, obliged every one to conform to Episcopal worship and government, as she did not wish to see any Churches formed according to a freer model.

There were, however, in England men who lifted up the Presbyterian banner in these days. Their leader was Thomas Cartwright, a great Cambridge scholar whose preaching so moved the people that when he held forth in St. Mary's the windows of the Church had to be removed in order that the crowd outside might hear him. The first English Presbytery was formed at Wandsworth, a suburb of London, in 1572, though it was little more than what we now call a Session—a body of elders, presided over by a minister. Here and there similar societies came into existence, and in the Channel Islands a Presbyterian Church was organised under Queen Elizabeth's sanction. But in the later years of her reign she put down all such movements with a high hand, imprisoning Cartwright and others, and even condemning to death one minister, John Udall, for writing a book against bishops.

King James I. was no less a persecutor, as we have seen from his treatment of Andrew Melville. At a conference in Hampton Court Palace shortly after his

accession to the throne of England, he cried out in his rage—"Presbytery agreeth as well with monarchy as God and the Devil." Events indeed proved that Presbyterians were among the stoutest opponents of royal despotism, while they always remained loyal to the Crown as an institution. They could expect no favour from James, and scarcely dared to lift up their heads till the tyranny of his son, Charles I., forced a great part of England into rebellion. Then the Covenanters in Scotland joined hands with the Puritans in the South, and something like a revolution took place. The famous Long Parliament, elected in 1641, was pledged to a sweeping policy of reform in Church and State, and the Presbyterians at last had their chance. We have told already in Chapter XIII. how the Assembly of divines met at Westminster and tried to establish one system of doctrine and worship and Church rule for England and Scotland. But England after trying it for a few years had to give it up, because the people were not ripe for such a change. This led to great confusion.

In England there has always been more variety of religious belief than in other countries, except America. It has taken her a long time to learn that truth must be finally reached along the path of toleration and mutual understanding. The Episcopalians began the strife by doing their utmost to crush out the Presbyterians and others who would not accept their ideas about the Church and its worship. The Presbyterians then gained

the upper hand, and tried to abolish Episcopacy. And when the Episcopalians were restored they passed the Act of Uniformity, forcing their form of religion on everybody. It is a sorrowful tale of human folly. Christ was wounded again in the house of His friends. Only now are we coming to see clearly that His kingdom can never be extended or His cause maintained by such methods.

The Presbyterians were the greatest sufferers at the time by this wicked policy. The Church of the Bush had no freedom to grow in England. In 1662, when Charles II., renegade Presbyterian and secret Romanist, was firmly seated on the throne of his fathers, came the signal to tear it up by the roots, or, if that could not be, to burn it by a slow and cruel fire. Two thousand ministers were ejected from their pulpits on Black Bartholomew's Day—an anniversary to be remembered beside the fiery trial of French Protestantism ninety years earlier. The great majority of these were Presbyterians, and rather than consent to violate their consciences by declaring their assent and consent to everything in the Prayer Book, they went forth like heroes into the wilderness. Forbidden to worship within five miles of a town, made liable to fine and imprisonment for preaching the Gospel as they believed it, forced to take the Lord's Supper according to the Anglican rite as a condition of holding any public office, debarred from study at the national seats of learning, proscribed as if belonging to an inferior race, they yet bore all with the

utmost patience, and faced the future confident in the ultimate victory of their cause.

Prominent among these martyrs was the saintly Richard Baxter. He did not die for his faith, but more than almost any man of that time he lived for it. For twenty years he was the model pastor of Kidderminster; weak in body, but active in mind, he was ever toiling for the good of men, and his numerous writings are fragrant with the beauty of holiness. Presbyterian by conviction, he did not believe in the sole Divine right of any form of Church government, and in an age of sharp controversy he set an example of breadth and charity. He could not bend his conscience to the Act of Uniformity, and so submitted to suffering and shameful persecution. The infamous Jeffreys sentenced him to eighteen months' imprisonment; to-day it is the judge and not the prisoner who stands condemned at the bar of history.

A different type of Presbyterian was Daniel Defoe, the clever man of letters who wrote many a book and pamphlet in defence of religious freedom and is best remembered as the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, that first and greatest of adventure stories in our literature.

Now the word *Nonconformist* came to be generally used to denote those who refused to conform to the Established Church of England and its ways. The Presbyterians, along with their companions in misfortune—the Independents, Baptists, and Quakers—obtained

liberty of worship at the Revolution of 1688 under the enlightened rule of William III. They continued for a while to keep the lead in numbers and influence—there were five hundred and more Presbyterian meeting-houses in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century—when a more subtle foe than the Stuart kings attacked them. This was the cold spirit of unbelief that we have already traced in Scotland in the form of Moderatism. Somehow the Presbyterian ministers seemed to be more chilled by its icy breath than others. Too many of them ceased to preach the Gospel of Salvation by Divine Grace alone; there were those who even doubted the Godhead of the Lord Jesus. So “the hungry sheep looked up, and were not fed.” The chapels fell largely into the hands of the Unitarians, and the vigorous Presbyterianism which had survived the years of persecution sank so low as to be almost extinct in England.

Just here we recognise a marvellous Providence. At the very time when the ancient candlestick appeared likely to be removed out of its place, a burning and shining light was kindled under another name. John Wesley in 1738 became the apostle of a new evangelism; the mighty movement of Methodism began within the Church of England, spread rapidly outside of it, and was organised almost unconsciously on Presbyterian lines. “After I am gone,” said Wesley, “the Methodists will be a regular Presbyterian Church.” And Principal Workman, the latest Wesleyan historian,<sup>1</sup> wrote so



recently as 1912 : "Methodism undoubtedly is Presbyterian in the main outlines of its organisation, both in England and America. The Presbyterian stamp was impressed upon it by Wesley himself. His 'superintendents' or 'elder ministers' in each circuit or parish, his system of 'stewards' and 'leaders,' his annual 'conferences,' his 'quarterly meetings' of the ministers and laymen in every circuit, all fell in so closely with the Presbyterian system that the later division into synods, the later ordination of the ministers by the laying on of hands of the senior brethren, the emphasis and value placed on the pastoral office, the later admission of the laity to all the courts of the Church, have consolidated, not altered the work he began." And as the parent tree proceeded to put forth shoots, these revealed the Presbyterian character even more distinctly. True, the type of doctrine was not that of Calvin, for Wesley presented a side of Christian truth that Calvin kept too much in the background; the arrangements as to the ministry were very different; the new denomination was more congenial to the English mind than the somewhat rigid Presbyterian pattern. It arose to do the work that the age most required.

Thus we learn not to rely on mere names, but on that which lies behind them. Methodism to a large extent served itself heir to the older English Presbyterianism. Yet it never adopted the name which was destined in due time to live again under happier conditions. For the Presbyterians of England, though sick nigh unto

death, did not die. Life returned to the weakened body, chiefly from the North. The Seceders planted themselves in England as well as in Ireland. The breath of evangelical revival that broke up the long frost of Scottish Moderatism was felt south of the Tweed, and Scots congregations sprang up in various places, clothing the dry bones with flesh. In certain parts of the country, notably in Northumberland, there was no break in the tradition, and the old elements blended themselves naturally with the new. So two Synods came to be constituted—the English Presbyterian and the United Presbyterian. The former represented the standpoint of the Free Church of Scotland; the latter was really part of the United Presbyterian Church. And there were a few other congregations belonging directly to the Established Church of Scotland.

But in so large a country as England with its many strong Churches, small divided groups of Presbyterians could not hope to make much progress. Hence a movement for union, which was consummated at Liverpool in 1876. The number of congregations entering into the union was 270, with 50,000 members. Since then there has been one Presbyterian Church of England, and though it stands only seventh among the denominations of the country, with 364 places of worship and 86,783 communicants, it possesses an influence far beyond its size.

Many Presbyterian preachers have deeply stirred the minds and hearts of English folk. Regent Square

Church in London was built for those who thronged to hear the eloquence of Edward Irving ; it was afterwards the scene of the powerful ministries of James Hamilton and Oswald Dykes. Liverpool will not soon forget John Watson, still better known as "Ian Maclaren." Newcastle has no memorial of John Knox except a Church that bears his name, but her Cathedral contains a fine monument to a Presbyterian moderator—Dr. Collingwood Bruce, the historian of the Roman Wall. There never was a more dauntless hero of the Cross than William Chalmers Burns, whom a small English Presbyterian Synod sent forth to do pioneer work in China. In that vast heathen land he founded a mission which is growing more rapidly to-day than the Church which gave it birth.

In 1895 an important new departure was made. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, long barred against Dissenters from the Established Church, were free at last to all-comers, and the Presbyterians, always zealous to provide a learned ministry, saw their opportunity. Already the Congregationalists had planted a College at Oxford ; Cambridge was chosen as the site of Westminster College. The name recalled the palmy days of the past, while the place offered favourable soil for gathering the harvest of a better time. There Presbyterian youth are now being trained to do their part in evangelising a greater England than of yore. The dream is no longer of sectarian rivalry and triumph, but of a broadly Christian revival in which the quickened

life of each branch of the Holy Catholic Church will bring new strength to the whole.

The standard *History of the Presbyterians in England* was written in 1889 by the Rev. Dr. Drysdale of Morpeth. He has condensed the narrative into a small handbook, *The English Presbyterians* (8d.). Both are published by the denomination.

For the general history of English Nonconformists, Principal Selbie's little book in the Home University Library can be strongly recommended. Dr. Workman's *History of Methodism* referred to in this chapter is one of the Cambridge shilling manuals of Science and Literature.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE AWAKING OF WALES.

WALES is the only country in which the Presbyterians are known also as Methodists, and thereby hangs an interesting tale. The little mountainous land that lies so near to England and is yet so different from it, has had quite an independent religious history. Religion here has ever been closely wedded to the spirit of nationality. The Welsh folk have never been willing to accept forms of faith and worship that other people thought good enough for them. They have preferred to develop a Church life of their own, and so it has a character to-day that we do not find anywhere else. In the speech of the ancient Britons, which is still a living tongue among their hills and valleys, they have a language well fitted to express their deepest feelings. The Bush burns there with an intense and glowing flame.

The Reformation made Wales Protestant, but at first did not seem to make it more Christian. There was no enthusiasm for the bishops and clergy sent over from

England. An Act of Parliament passed in 1564 lamented that the population remained "in the like or rather more darkness and ignorance than they were in the time of papistry." The same Act ordered a translation of the Bible to be made into Welsh. It was long in appearing, but as soon as it came to be read and studied signs appeared that Wales was awaking from her sleep. Puritanism, now entering on its great period of struggle in England and Scotland, began to make converts here too. Presbyterian, Baptist, and Independent congregations were formed, mostly in South Wales, but the nation as a whole was not touched, and the eighteenth century was well on its way before a real spiritual movement stirred men's hearts.

It was just when John Wesley was starting on his marvellous career as an evangelist, when the Erskines were arousing Scotland, and when the Moravians were organising themselves in Germany, that the earliest and most notable Welsh revival took place. All the world was longing for a deeper religious life, and God had His messengers ready. In Wales the Word came through three young men. First of these, and generally regarded as the leader of the movement, was Howell Harris of Trevecca. Born and bred within the Established Church, and looking forward to be one of its ministers, he was continually prevented from attaining his desire, and had to do his work as a layman. Thus though he never left the Church, he became the real founder of a new denomination in Wales, as Wesley was in England.

His spiritual birth-year was 1735. At the Communion Table he felt the throbbing of a new life. So happy was he that he could not help telling people on the way home that he *knew* his sins were forgiven. A fervent desire for the salvation of others filled his soul. From place to place he went, preaching the Gospel with burning zeal, despised by the State clergy as an intruder, attacked by angry mobs, yet ever persevering in his mission, and drawing to himself disciples whom he enrolled in praying societies. Among his converts was William Williams of Pantycelyn, the sweet singer of the Welsh Revival, author of "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah."

The fire was kindled in another direction by Daniel Rowlands, a clergyman at Llangeitho in Cardiganshire. Not much over twenty years of age, he was a preacher of tremendous power, and crowds flocked to hear him from all parts of the land. A third voice was heard in Pembrokeshire, where Howell Davies, also a minister of the Establishment, addressed multitudes in the open air, and dispensed the Lord's Supper to eager masses of people. All this happened in the course of one year. Very soon after, Wesley and Whitefield paid their first visit to Wales. They could only preach in English, but Harris and his fellow-labourers bore a message to their countrymen in their own language, and the work advanced by leaps and bounds.

It was George Whitefield who had most influence—Wesley was an Arminian—in giving form and shape to



the new movement. He was a strong Calvinist, and the genius of the Welsh, like the Scotch, was more in sympathy with the teaching and temperament of the French reformer. So Methodism in Wales took on a Calvinistic colour. An Association meeting, held at Watford near Cardiff in January 1743, is looked upon as marking the origin of the Calvinistic Methodist Church, but for more than sixty years it consisted of little more than gatherings for prayer, preaching, and fellowship held all over the country without any formal separation from the State Establishment. This is not unlike the way in which the Wesleyan Methodist Church was formed; only it had the benefit of a born organiser in John Wesley. Such a man did not arise in Wales till later.

The Episcopal Church of Wales, like that of England, lost the great opportunity of guiding the evangelical revival and reaping its fruits within her own borders. Her bishops discouraged Howell Harris in his efforts, refusing to ordain him. Rowlands was deprived of his curacy, and there was much petty persecution. The people in consequence gave up attending the parish churches and flocked to hear the men who, in farm-houses, in society meetings, in rude chapels hastily built, and under the canopy of heaven, declared the Gospel in its freeness. At Trevecca, Harris founded a kind of religious colony, with a "family" of over a hundred, and the Countess of Huntingdon, a benevolent English lady who sympathised with his views, chose the same

place for a college which she established for the training of ministers.

Another generation, however, had to pass before the Presbyterian Church of Wales came out into the open. When the time was ripe, the man was forthcoming. Thomas Charles of Bala was a truly great religious leader, to whom the world, and not merely his native land, owes a vast debt. For he has a place in history as at once a founder of the London Missionary and Religious Tract Societies, the real beginner of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the father of Welsh Christian education, and the organiser of the Calvinistic Methodist Church. Like his predecessors, he was connected with the Established Church—was, indeed, a minister of it. He had been converted when eighteen years of age through a sermon of Daniel Rowlands, was educated at Oxford, and in due time settled at Bala, by the side of a beautiful lake in North Wales. Denied a regular living in the Church, he began in 1784 to preach in the Methodist chapel offered him. He also set himself to establish, first, a system of circulating day-schools, and then of Sunday schools. Nothing has done so much to make Wales an intelligent and Bible-loving country. The schools were meant, not for boys and girls only, but for all who were willing to learn. So in Wales still you find grown-up men and women attending the Sunday school, and going in for advanced Bible study.

The story of how the Bible Society came into being has often been told, though not always correctly. It is

quite true that Mary Jones, a girl of sixteen, walked nearly thirty miles barefooted over the hills to Bala to obtain a copy of the Scriptures from Mr. Charles. You can see it to-day, preserved under a glass cover, in the Bible House in Queen Victoria Street, London, from which the whole world is now supplied with the Word of God in nearly every tongue. But the journey of Mary Jones was no more than a touching illustration of the scarcity of the Scriptures in Wales, and of the keen desire of the people to possess them. It was the rapid growth of Charles's Sunday schools that caused the great demand for the Bible. And, when lying in bed in London in November 1802, the idea occurred to him of a society for the free circulation of the Book of books among his countrymen. When he mentioned the matter at a committee meeting of the Religious Tract Society a few days later, it was warmly taken up. "If for Wales, why not for the kingdom? Why not for the world?"

But Charles had also the insight to see that Wales, if the Bible was to be a living power in the hearts of its inhabitants, needed something more than scattered associations without a regularly ordained ministry. A fully equipped Church was required. Its elements were already there, and Charles had the boldness and wisdom to venture on the step that the times demanded. Many years before he had drawn up rules that pointed to a new denomination. At last, in the summer of 1811, he burned his boats. He took part at Bala in a solemn ordination service, when eight men were appointed to

administer the ordinances of Christ to the people. Six weeks after we find him at a similar service at Llandilo, in South Wales, where thirteen were ordained. So another great Presbyterian Church, which had been in the making for more than half a century, was fairly launched on its way. The Associations gradually assumed the powers of Presbyteries. A Confession of Faith was adopted. In 1840 it was resolved to undertake a mission to India. In 1864 the Associations of North and South Wales were united in a General Assembly.

The Calvinistic Methodist Church is now the strongest denomination in Wales, and the only one that has a really national origin. It has about 1000 ministers and 1500 congregations. According to the latest statistics, it had nearly 184,000 communicants, and reckoned about 214,000 Sunday scholars. No Church gives greater attention to the higher education of both ministry and people. In Dr. Lewis Edwards and Dr. T. C. Edwards it has produced theologians of the first rank. Though becoming more and more Presbyterian in character, it retains traces of its Methodist birth, and has some features of Congregationalism. The ministers are ordained only on approval by the North or South Associations, the chapels are the property of the whole denomination, and the powers usually possessed in other Presbyterian Churches by the Session belong to the whole body of members assembled in Church meeting. Then there are two types of congregation—the English-

and the Welsh-speaking. The former number rather more than 330, nearly as many as the Presbyterian Church of England. The latter, of course, are in a large majority.

The ties between this young and vigorous Church and the older Presbyterian bodies have been growing closer year by year. They have much to learn from Wales in zeal for religious knowledge, in evangelistic fervour, in patriotic devotion. English pulpits are now freely open to Welshmen, with their Celtic fire and impassioned speech. In America there is a distinctly Welsh Presbyterian Church. If in the past the special circumstances of her history and the peculiarity of her language have separated Wales from other Presbyterian lands, it is certain that the future will bring all together in a real unity, and that her example will tend to hasten that union between Presbyterianism and Methodism which is one of the most hopeful things we see looming on the near horizon.

Welsh Presbyterians have chosen as their emblem, not the Burning Bush, but one closely akin—the Open Bible, above it the radiance of the Descending Dove, and inscribed beneath the words “Goleuni y Bywyd” (The Light of Life). For it is the Dove-like Spirit shining upon the sacred page that keeps the Church’s fire aglow.

The great name in Welsh fiction, though little known outside of Wales, is that of Daniel Owen of Mold. The Calvinistic Methodist Church is the centre of his books, as it was of his heart. His best

work, *Rhys Lewis, Minister of Bethel: an Autobiography*, has been translated into English, and is published by Hughes & Son, Wrexham (3s. 6d.). Mr. Gladstone was an admirer of *Rhys Lewis*, though he only read it in the translation, which Welshmen think does far from justice to the original.

For a good short sketch of *Nonconformity in Wales*, see the little book so entitled, by Rev. H. Elvet Lewis, published by National Free Church Council. More exact details will be found in *Calvinistic Methodist Holy Orders*, by Rev. D. E. Jenkins, Denbigh. It is really a history of Welsh Presbyterianism by an expert. Mr. Jenkins is author of a *Life of Thomas Charles*, in three volumes, a monument of painstaking research.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

WHEN Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic, and opened up the way from Europe to the New World, it was the faith of the Church of Rome that he and his companions carried with them. The Spaniards and Portuguese who came after him were even more zealous on behalf of that form of religion. In Central and South America to-day we see the fruits, and we cannot say that they are good. Ignorance and superstition abound, the state of morals is bad, and though there has been much material prosperity, there is little spiritual progress to record.

It is in North America that a pure Christianity has won its greatest triumphs. To Virginia, Englishmen went in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and the Protestant Episcopal Church was planted on the other side of the sea. But more truly epoch-making was the expedition of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620. Grievously oppressed at home, they sought and found religious liberty on the soil of New England. Plymouth Rock, where "the breaking



waves dash high on a storm and rock-bound coast," still stands as a memorial of their glorious venture for conscience' sake. So Puritanism, especially in the form of Independency, began to flourish among a race of free-men, and much land came to be possessed for Christ and His Church.

Persecution also drove the first Presbyterians over the angry ocean to a haven of peace. The earliest emigration was from Holland, where the cruel power of Spain was threatening the life of the young republic founded by William the Silent. In New Amsterdam, now New York, in 1628, Jonas Michelius, a Dutch minister, gathered together fifty persons to a celebration of the Lord's Supper, and organised them into a Church according to the Reformed order. For nearly forty years the Netherlands held sway on and nigh the Hudson River. Then their territory was captured by Great Britain. But the Dutch Presbyterians were allowed freedom to worship in their own way, and they prospered more under the new rule than before. Gradually the English tongue was introduced into their services, and in 1867 they dropped the title "Dutch," being now known as the "Reformed Church in America." The Heidelberg Catechism which they brought with them from Europe in the beginning of the seventeenth century is still their favourite manual of instruction, and they have a liturgy and system of government that go back to the same early days. This, the oldest Presbyterian Church in the United States, has over 100,000 members,

and does excellent mission work in China, Japan, and India.

The main body of American Presbyterianism took its rise in what were known as the Middle Colonies, now New Jersey and Pennsylvania. While it, too, was the result of over-sea emigration, a great debt is due to the famous Quaker, William Penn, who gave his name to one of the leading American States and built Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love. For the Quakers whom Penn brought from England in 1682 to find a refuge in a strange land which they were denied in the land of their birth, were among the best friends of religious toleration. The liberty which they sought for themselves they were willing to give to others. So Penn was only too glad to welcome to his new colony the Presbyterians of Scotland and the North of Ireland who were suffering from sore persecution in the homeland. They soon outnumbered the Quakers, and churches composed of Covenanters as staunch as the men who fought at Bothwell Bridge began to arise in America. In 1705 the Presbytery of Philadelphia was formed, with Francis Mackemie, an Ulster stalwart, as Moderator, and ten years later, a Synod. From this germ there was destined to grow the largest Presbyterian Church in the world.

Progress was arrested for a while by a disruption. George Whitefield arrived from England; his revival methods were warmly approved by some Presbyterians, and keenly opposed by others. This led to a breach,

which was healed in fourteen years, about the shortest time on record for such a process, which usually takes very much longer. But history has always moved rapidly in America.

A notable event was the founding in 1746 of New Jersey College by the Synod of New York. It was transferred to Princeton, a village in that State, in 1756, and so, as the outcome of Presbyterian zeal for the cause of higher learning, an institution arose which ranks with Yale and Harvard among the oldest and best Universities in America. Jonathan Edwards, perhaps the greatest philosopher and saint the New World has produced, was one of the first presidents of Princeton. Shortly after, John Witherspoon, minister at Paisley in Scotland, and a champion of the Evangelical party in the Kirk, was called to fill this office. He arrived in America just at the time when the Revolution was beginning, and he took sides with those who, in their desire for entire independence, revolted from British rule. The Presbyterians rallied strongly to George Washington and the patriotic banner, and Witherspoon was one of those who signed the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia in 1776. There was a fear in many minds that if the British Government vanquished the American colonists, Episcopacy might be established as the State religion, and the men who had crossed the sea to escape the tyranny of kings and bishops were not inclined to run the risk.

Thus the old hall of Independence in Philadelphia,

where are religiously preserved the table and inkstand of that July day when the United States became a nation, has a special interest for Presbyterians. It was in that city, too, thirteen years later that the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was constituted. While the old Scottish standards were maintained, an emphatic declaration was added—"God alone is Lord of the conscience." The newly-won freedom of the nation demanded a free Church. At that time there were 188 ministers and 419 congregations.

A period of coldness and dulness followed the excitement of these days, but the nineteenth century ushered in a season of revival. There was an awakening to the needs of the heathen world, an uprising of sentiment against public wrongs, a quickening of thought on questions of doctrine. In 1837 the Presbyterian Church was the most influential religious body in the United States, with more than 2000 ministers and 220,000 members. That year, however, saw it split from end to end, and divided into two denominations. In the main it was a conflict between the conservative and the liberal spirit. The "Old School" stood for strict order and highly orthodox belief, the "New School" for greater freedom of view and liberty of practice.

Another cause of disunion was the Slavery question. The strife of North and South which rent the nation in twain during the Civil War of 1861-65 had a similar effect in the Presbyterian Church. The Southern section seceded, and for the last half-century and more have

remained a separate Church. But this indirectly brought about the healing of the previous schism. The strength of the "Old School" lay in the South, and after the war it was not difficult to bring together into one Church all the Northern States that had separated thirty years before. So in 1870 a happy union took place, and though the South continues apart, the former bitterness has almost died out, and no doubt the healing influences of time will bring complete unity again.

According to the latest statistics available the Northern Presbyterian Church now numbers over 10,000 ministers and 1,300,000 communicants; the Southern Church, 3217 and 269,773.

Yet even this great record is but part of the story of American Presbyterianism. We have mentioned only three Churches, and several other branches of the same family remain to be noticed. The Germans who came to America two centuries ago from the Rhine Palatinate were accustomed there to the Reformed doctrine and worship, like the Dutchmen to the Heidelberg Catechism. They joined themselves at first to the Dutch Church, but afterwards took a line of their own, and devoted special attention to the increasing numbers of emigrants from Germany. The Reformed Church in the United States which was thus formed has about 300,000 members. Then the movements in Scotland away from the Established Church during the eighteenth century all had a certain effect in America. The Reformed Presbyterians, or Cameronians, with their stout

adherence to the Covenants under all changes, are more numerous in the States to-day than in Scotland or Ireland. The Secession, even in its Burgher and Anti-Burgher sections, rooted itself firmly in the Eastern States, but the union of these elements at home was speedily followed by an amalgamation on the other side of the sea. Since 1858 the United Presbyterian Church of America, with 130,000 members, has stood for this part of the Presbyterian testimony, but it differs in some important respects from the Church of that name in Scotland. Solemn covenanting with God is still practised as a religious exercise, and psalm-singing is regarded as the only lawful form of Church praise.

A Church which had an interesting separate existence for nearly a hundred years—the Cumberland Presbyterian—was reunited with the parent body in 1906. It came into being as the result of a revival in Kentucky about 1810, and held out against extreme Calvinistic doctrine like the Evangelical Union in Scotland, which had a similar history. But the changed attitude of the Presbyterians towards the Westminster Confession, allowing liberty of opinion on matters now no longer considered vital, led to the Cumberland Church coming back to the original fold, though a remnant refused to return.

The latest Presbyterian Church to be formed in America is the Welsh, due chiefly to reasons of language and national feeling. But it is safe to say that such reasons will have less and less effect in

future in bringing new denominations into existence. The leading Presbyterian Church, for instance, has learned to cultivate a very broad policy. It has German-speaking, even Bohemian-speaking, Presbyteries within its borders.

The outlook of Presbyterianism in America is very bright. Though not the largest Protestant communion—the Methodists and Baptists stand higher in point of numbers, and the Lutherans of late have shown a more rapid increase—it is second to none in weight and influence. Two millions of members rally to its banner. On the neutral ground of a new and free country it has beaten its old rival Episcopacy in fair, honourable rivalry. It strenuously upholds the tradition of a learned ministry, is marking real advance in the reverent conduct of public worship, and takes a foremost place in the work of spreading the Gospel at home and abroad. Though divided, it is becoming more and more one body, and the stream of its progress flows on in ever-expanding volume and power.

In 1910 we attended the annual sittings of the General Assembly in Atlantic City. The meeting-place was a large music hall at the end of a long pier stretching out into the ocean. The freshness of the atmosphere, the freedom of the boundless deep, seemed to give a tone to the whole proceedings. It was the old Presbyterianism, but without any starch or excess of dignity, and combined with it was the new spirit of buoyant hope and almost riotous optimism. We felt that here



was a Church going forward with a conquering outlook to the winning not only of the American continent but of the whole world for Christ. In the hall of its councils we could hear the prophecy of a universal harmony in Him "Who maketh all things new," and as we gazed on the limitless expanse of sea and land we saw no end to what this Church might do for the larger kingdom of the Christ.

Another still more recent picture may round off this chapter. On 4th March 1913 we gather on the steps of the Capitol in Washington to behold a new President of the United States installed in office. The man of the day is Dr. Woodrow Wilson. In his person he represents some of the strongest influences that have gone to the making both of American Presbyterianism and American nationality. He himself is an elder of the Church, a Christian leader of the people. He was president of Princeton, the original Presbyterian College. He is a direct descendant of Wodrow, the historian of the Covenanters. Scotland and Ulster have an important place in his pedigree. His ancestors on both sides were Presbyterian ministers. In him, too, the South joins hands again with the North. The blue blood of generations of pious men and women runs in his veins. Not in vain did these fathers and mothers of a mighty race make their venture of faith across the Atlantic. They builded better than they knew, for they founded a State as well as a Church on the Rock of Ages. Let us be thankful that God is now raising up the sons to

complete the work that their sires so nobly began. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou shalt make princes in all the earth."

There is no good popular history of American Presbyterianism easily accessible to British readers, but there is a rich literature on the subject in the land of its birth. Apply to Witherspoon Buildings, Philadelphia, the headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Leonard W. Bacon's *History of American Christianity*, with introduction by James Bryce (London edition, 1899), gives an excellent general view.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### PIONEERING IN CANADA.

THE story how the vast Dominion of Canada grew to be what it is to-day is quite a romance, and illustrates the saying that truth is stranger than fiction. We note first of all how one nation—the French—seemed to carry everything before them, conquering the Indian tribes, and establishing settlements near the great lakes and rivers. Then how, in a very short time,—thanks to the heroism of Wolfe, dying in the arms of victory on the Heights of Abraham, above Quebec,—the power of France was broken, and Great Britain entered on the possession of a rich and far-stretching territory. How a few years later she lost what are now the United States, and did not realise that she had gained and was going to keep another and scarcely less valuable American colony. How, during the nineteenth century, westward the course of empire took its way till, within living memory, there was opened up a land of plenteous harvests and abounding wealth, to which men are still flocking to push fortune and win fame. It is for us now

to add a new chapter to that story—to tell how the Christian Church, and especially the Presbyterian branch of it, followed in the train of these pioneers and built up a Zion in the wilderness, doing much to transform it into a garden of the Lord.

Nova Scotia, the peninsula stretching out into the Atlantic as the advance-guard of the Canadian Dominion, deserves the place of honour in this pioneering record. It was the first of these lands to be won by Britain, and you can read the sad tale of the exile of its French inhabitants in “*Evangeline*,” that touching poem of Longfellow. But it was the will of Providence that a sturdy Presbyterian race should occupy the soil, and the name of the colony shows the leading part Scotland had in its settlement. So to this new Scotland came ministers of the Burgher and Anti-Burgher Kirks, more active than the Auld Kirk in missionary effort, and they in the later years of the eighteenth century founded Presbyteries that grew into a strong native Church. Then, after the energies of the Church of Scotland were revived by the evangelical movement under Chalmers, the Glasgow Colonial Society was formed, and more ministers went out to Nova Scotia and the adjacent colony of New Brunswick. It is no use dwelling now on the divisions that for a long time prevented the Presbyterian bodies there, as in other parts of Canada, from becoming one. The troubles at home stood in the way of complete unity abroad till the pressing spiritual needs of the new country and the difficulty of making the

children of the colonists understand the questions that kept their fathers apart, drove them to unite. Nova Scotia began in 1860 that series of unions which ended, as we shall see, fifteen years later in the formation of one Presbyterian Church for the whole of Canada.

We must now see what was happening on the mainland. No easy matter was it at first for Protestants to find footing in a territory which was intensely Roman Catholic, for the French Canadians were and still remain most devoted adherents of the Church of Rome. But it was in a room in the Jesuit College of Quebec that a Scots army chaplain held the first Presbyterian service, and the Franciscan monks of Montreal actually lent their church for a while to another minister, receiving in payment a box of candles and two hogsheads of Spanish wine! These services, however, were almost entirely for soldiers; the Presbyterian emigrants who arrived from the old country, instead of settling among the French-speaking population, pushed their way into the interior, and soon made their influence felt in the great region of Upper Canada, now known as Ontario. Here, too, the Scotch Seceders were well to the front; to them, indeed, and to the Dutch Reformed Church of the United States belong the credit of pioneer work at a time when sixteen ministers had to do their best to meet the needs of 47,000 Presbyterians.

So early as 1812 a band of Highland crofters from Sutherlandshire were brought by the Earl of Selkirk to occupy a large tract of land in the Hudson's Bay Com-

pany's territory towards the North-West, and a minister of the Church of Scotland went out to be their pastor. Kildonan, as their settlement was called, after the parish from which most of them came, was the advance-post of a wondrous line of progress that has not yet ended.

For many years, however, the lands near the great lakes—Ontario, Erie, Huron, and Superior—were the chosen ground for emigrants, and there the upbuilding of a strong Presbyterian Church went on side by side with the efforts of other denominations. The Church of Scotland became more alive to her Colonial mission, and notwithstanding the crippling of her energies by the Disruption of 1843, Established as well as Free continued to promote the welfare of Canada by sending out ministers to meet the increasing need. There came to be three Presbyterian Churches in the western provinces—the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Canada, and the Missionary Synod of Canada, an offshoot of the Scottish Seceders. But here, as in Nova Scotia, the forces that made for union succeeded in breaking down the walls of separation, till finally there was in 1875 a great uniting day in Montreal, and the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Canada was constituted, every part of the Dominion being included in it.

Canada, the land of pioneers, thus led the way in that glorious succession of Presbyterian unions for which we

have good reason to thank God during the last fifty years. No fewer than 623 ministers, with their charges, entered into this union. The united Church was well equipped with five colleges, so that she no longer needed to depend on the home country for her supply of ministers. Missions, too, had by this time been undertaken to several foreign lands. The difficulty that had for a good while stood in the way of union—the support of one section of the Church by State money—had been got over by a satisfactory arrangement, and never did a denomination start with more heart and hope on a new career of progress than did the Canadian Presbyterian Church on that memorable occasion.

Events since have amply justified the hopes then cherished. Seldom has a Church had given to it when young so immense a home mission problem to face. It is a problem partly old, partly new. The older is perhaps the most difficult. Can French Canada be won for Protestantism? In 1842, after nearly two hundred years of British influence, there was not a single French Canadian Protestant on the St. Lawrence. It was considered hopeless to attack Rome's chief stronghold on the North American Continent. But the work of Father Chiniquy, a converted Roman Catholic priest, was attended with remarkable success. By 1892 there were 12,000 French Canadian Protestants in the province of Quebec, and 20,000 in the United States. Quietly yet perseveringly, without bigotry and through the simple ministry of truth and love, the Presbyterian Church of



Canada seeks to spread the principles of the Reformation in the most benighted part of the Dominion.

The newer problem is at once more fascinating and more hopeful. Can the regions of the North-West—in which there is enough land for settlement to cover the whole of Central Europe—be won for the kingdom of Christ? The tide of emigration rolls like a flood from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and is now beginning even to sweep round towards the Arctic Sea. New lines of railway are being laid that will open up vast ranges of rich territory, and a new population is being scattered in small groups over an enormous area. And it is from Scotland and the north of Ireland, as well as from those parts of the United States where Presbyterianism is strong, that the great rush of the best emigrants comes, so that about two-thirds of the thousands pouring into these regions fall naturally within the spiritual oversight of this Church. How is she striving to meet this unequalled opportunity, the biggest task that has been assigned to almost any Church in our time?

Often have we seen in the course of this history that the hour calls forth the man. So has it been in Canada. In the Perthshire village of Dull, by the banks of the lordly Tay, there was born in 1839 a lad—James Robertson—whom God intended for this work. He was distinguished from the first by a tenacious memory and an indomitable perseverance. Though even-tempered and self-controlled he was “a terrible fighter,” his master said, when fighting had to be done; so, after

carrying off the palm as the most promising pupil of the parish school, he set forth when sixteen years old with his parents, brother, and sister for Canada. He soon began work as a teacher in the new land—a raw, awkward, uncouth fellow, but with a grit in him that speedily compelled attention. At Woodstock, Ontario, in a Highland congregation, he found a spiritual home, and in due time gave himself to study for the Christian ministry. His first charge was in Western Ontario, but the call of the strange wild country west of the lakes soon began to sound in his ears. It was in 1870 that a Presbytery was erected in Manitoba; three years later, in the dead of winter, James Robertson went to survey the new situation, and to see whether his help was needed on the westward trail. He preached for six weeks in Winnipeg, inspected the field around, with the result that ere long he was settled in the pioneer city of the West, and had commenced his real life-work as a path-breaker for the Gospel in these regions. For seven years he was a pastor with a wide outlook and ever-extending ministry, till he was forced by a still clearer call to become Superintendent of Missions in the North-West—a genuine Presbyterian bishop with a diocese that grew and grew until it attained the dimensions of almost a world.

For twenty-one years—1881 to 1902—he devoted body and soul to his mighty task, travelling incessantly, getting men to occupy the various posts, working them hard, handling them with firmness and wisdom, caring

for them with tenderness and sympathy. All the while he was stirring up the Church in Canada and the Churches abroad to meet the pressing demand, pausing not till, with a word unfamiliar to his lips, "I am done out," he passed to his well-earned rest. At Kildonan, the original settlement of the great lone land for which he gave his life, he chose to be buried. There a block of granite tells how the story of his work, "for the good of his country and for the glory of God," is the history of the Presbyterian Church in Western Canada. The one Presbytery he found in 1881 with four congregations and eighteen mission stations had developed under him into eighteen Presbyteries with 141 congregations and 226 missions, giving service at 1130 points.

The greatest thing in the recent history of the Canadian Presbyterian Church has been the movement towards union with the Methodist Church of the Dominion. Undoubtedly the two strongest Protestant Churches in Canada are the Methodist and Presbyterian. They come very close in point of numbers, each claiming over a million souls, while the Episcopal Church is nearly as large.<sup>1</sup> The same motives that led to the welding together of the various Presbyterian elements are working to-day in the direction of a larger union. Old barriers no longer divide, and the urgent religious needs of a vast new country call loudly for combined effort. So enthusiastic has been the feeling that some

<sup>1</sup> The Census of 1911 gave the figures—Presbyterians, 1,115,324 ; Methodists, 1,079,829 ; Anglicans, 1,043,017.

were sanguine enough to hope that by this time the union would have taken place. But there are still difficulties, by no means serious, to be removed, and it has been wisely decided to allow a little more time for discussion. No one, however, doubts that this union must come and come soon. So the Presbyterian Church of Canada, which set a splendid example of union within her own family group, bids fair to give another and yet more striking illustration of the benefits of unity, not in the interests of any one denomination of Christians, but for the sake of the ever-growing and ever-concentrating kingdom of God.

Ralph Connor's many tales of Canadian pioneering are delightful and inspiring reading, all the more so as coming from a Presbyterian minister who writes from experience. He—the Rev. Charles W. Gordon—has also written *The Life of James Robertson*. Another popular author on similar lines is R. G. Knowles, whose stories show how the old Presbyterian spirit maintains a vigorous life in the new lands across the sea.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

IT is a beautiful thought, expressed in one of our favourite evening hymns, that in the Church

The voice of prayer is never silent,  
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

When British folk are about to fall asleep, their “brethren ’neath the western sky” are awaking, while those in Australia and New Zealand are already plying their morning tasks. We know too that the dwellers under the Southern Cross—that constellation of stars in the form of a cross that shines down upon one side of the world—have their seasons at exactly opposite times from the inhabitants of the Northern Hemisphere, keeping Christmas at the height of summer, and expecting cool or cold weather in June. But though things differ so greatly in that respect, the Bush that burned and flourished in the old lands of Christendom has rooted itself firmly in far distant soil, and no change of climate or season has checked its growth. We think of it rather as a Vine,

bearing rich clusters of fruit, in no danger of being consumed by the blasts of persecution that tried it so sorely in other periods and other places.

So we shall take a voyage from the home-land to see how the Presbyterian cause has fared beneath Southern skies. There are three routes from Great Britain to Australia—by the Suez Canal, by America, and by the Cape of Good Hope. Though the last route is the longest, we choose it because we shall thus be able to stop on the way and visit South Africa. For we cannot forget that when the course of exploration and empire began to circle round the globe, it was there that the first Christian pioneers halted and sowed the seed that is now yielding so large a harvest.

Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese captain, discovered the Cape of Good Hope, but the settlement of South Africa was accomplished by Dutch Presbyterians in 1652. They did not do much to build up a Church, though French Huguenots as well as settlers from the Netherlands had their opportunity before the British came and found that only ten ministers were looking after the needs of twenty thousand colonists. Things improved under the new rule from 1806 onwards. The few Dutch Reformed congregations were revived and quickened by the infusion of fresh blood from Scotland, for eleven Presbyterian pastors arrived from the land of John Knox in 1822 and took kindly to the fellowship of men belonging to their own faith and order, though not speaking the same language. They soon learned Dutch, and the

foundations were laid of a Church that is still much the strongest in South Africa, using both the tongues that are likely to be spoken for a long time to come in the Colony, and holding fast to the traditions of the early settlers, with their stern Calvinistic creed and simple, rugged piety.

We know the Dutch of South Africa best by the name of Boer, given them because so many were engaged in farming. The unhappy strife between Boer and Briton which went on more or less for over a hundred years has stood in the way of one Presbyterian Church for what is now, we are glad to say, one commonwealth. In 1824 the Boers began to "trek" or migrate to the North, and the colonists who took their places were mostly Scotch or English. Already a Scotch Church had been established in Cape Town, and gradually congregations were formed in the chief centres. But they were dispersed and disunited, and even after Presbyteries grew up in Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal, it was difficult to bring the various elements together. Union was much needed, and at last it came about, so far as the purely English-speaking Presbyterians were concerned, in 1897. The Presbyterian Church of South Africa had only thirty-three congregations at the start, but since then she has greatly increased her numbers, having in 1912 11,323 communicants and nearly 60,000 adherents. Her progress was arrested at first by the desolating war of 1899-1902. Now that peace prevails, and the old feud of races is giving place



to a feeling of common citizenship, there is nothing to hinder a great development. The crowds of emigrants attracted to the gold-fields of the Transvaal, the opening up of vast territories beyond, and the excellent prospects of the country under wise and settled government, all present a call to the Presbyterian Church of South Africa to do a worthy part in the evangelising of this land. No doubt in due time the way will be clear for union with the Dutch Church, which according to the census of 1911 claimed 250 congregations, 214,332 members, and 693,898 adherents. Heathenism, white as well as black, is a formidable foe to spiritual progress in these regions. Nothing but a united front will enable the Church to make headway against it. Distinctions of race and sect must be forgotten in the one desire to make South Africa a truly Christian country.

Sailing across other five thousand miles of sea, we reach Australia, that island-continent nearly as large as Europe, to which so many of our people have gone and are going in quest of health and work and gold. A hundred years ago only a small corner of it was occupied, as a settlement for convicts; by slow degrees did New South Wales, the original colony, become the home of respectable folk. Scotsmen were among the pioneers, and in 1817 they built a small church about thirty miles to the north of Sydney to which they gave the name of Ebenezer. It stands to this day, the first Presbyterian church in Australia, and the oldest of any denomination in the colony. Soon after there came to Sydney from

Ayrshire John Dunmore Lang, the real founder of Presbyterianism in the new land. His labours were most indefatigable, but his methods were too masterful, and unfortunate divisions began to show themselves. The spirit of disunion spread more or less to the other colonies that grew up in that part of the world—Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and the island of Tasmania. It was some time before the conflicting elements could be welded together, and for a while the divisions of the Church in Scotland were repeated and made worse on Australian soil.

Victoria, with its capital city of Melbourne, where Presbyterianism was strongest, was most of all troubled by this tendency. One minister could say in 1859 that he had witnessed six disruptions, each fragment, however small, calling itself a Synod. But by that time the evil tendency had been checked. In all the colonies the Church learned to show a visible and solid unity; in West Australia, the last to be settled, there was never any question of separate bodies of Presbyterians.

The discovery of gold and other precious metals, and of fertile land for cultivation, with the urgency of meeting the needs of the increasing population, made the Church think less of her differences and more of her opportunities. Well-equipped colleges for the training of the ministry were established in Sydney and Melbourne, more recently also in Brisbane, the capital of Queensland. In Adelaide, the chief city of South Australia, there is a united college of four non-Episcopal denominations for instruction in

Theology. And in all the leading colonies an earnest effort is being made to grapple with the problem—how to provide Gospel privileges for the ever-increasing rush of emigrants, how to build up a Church that will win and keep Australia for Christ.

Nineteen hundred was a memorable year. Then all the Australian colonies were drawn together into one Commonwealth. That led to the question being asked—If one Commonwealth, why not one Presbyterian Church instead of six? The answer came when New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, West Australia, and Tasmania joined their forces in Church as well as State. To the patient labours of Dr. John Meiklejohn, now Principal of Emmanuel College, Brisbane, this splendid Presbyterian union was largely due. He has been called the Rainy of Australia. While each of the combined Churches enjoys home rule in its own sphere, there is a General Assembly over all which takes a wider view, and deals with matters affecting the whole Church in the Commonwealth and beyond it. The good done by the union is seen in the fact—brought out by the religious census of 1912—that the Presbyterian Church has made greater progress in Australia than any other denomination, the increase amounting to no less than 30 per cent. The number of people enrolled as belonging to this Church was 558,336. This proves that a very big Presbyterian element must be pouring in and that it is being well looked after. Another result of the union has been a strong desire to

co-operate more closely with other Christian Churches, and even to consider the possibility of including them in a yet larger fellowship.

Australia is a land of "magnificent distances." Here, as in Canada, Presbyterian ministers and evangelists have to do much rough work—to ride or drive along weary and difficult tracks, and to be content at first with small and scattered congregations. "The Bush" is the name given to the wild uncultivated country that forms the largest part of the Australian continent. Much of it has been reclaimed, and handsome towns and cities are now rising on sites that were once dreary desert. But the grandest work of all has to be done by Christ's Church, causing the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. And the Old Kirk, whose motto is the Bush, burning yet not consumed, has gone forth into these promising wastes to help to plant this joy-bringing and wonder-working Evangel.

We have to travel over another stretch of ocean before this chapter is finished. Several days' sailing farther to the south takes us to New Zealand, which might more fittingly be called New Britain; for here are two islands, more than three times as large as Scotland, peopled by a British stock that finds in them a temperate climate and a kindly soil well suited for the rearing of a robust race. The northern island was the first to be colonised, in the early forties of last century. At Auckland, Wellington, and Nelson services were begun by ministers from

Scotland. Not, however, till 1856 was a Presbytery formed at Auckland, and it soon developed into the "Presbyterian Church of New Zealand," the congregations being scattered in little groups over the country, extending so as to include the northern half of the south island.

It was in the extreme south of the new colony that in 1848 an expedition landed which reminds us of the adventure of the Pilgrim Fathers to found New England two hundred and thirty years earlier. For this was nothing less than a successful attempt by pious Presbyterians to found a New Scotland under the Southern Cross. A company had been started in Glasgow to promote the settlement of a Scotch colony in New Zealand, and the man chosen as pioneer was Captain Cargill, a descendant of the famous Covenanter of that name. Members of the Free Church, then beginning its career, were much interested in the company, and the idea took shape to make this if possible a religious as well as a commercial enterprise, and to accept as colonists only persons of good character who would do credit to the undertaking. So the ship *John Wycliffe* sailed from London with ninety emigrants, and the *Philip Laing* with two hundred and thirty-six. On board the latter was the Rev. Thomas Burns, nephew of Robert Burns the poet, appointed to be the first minister of the colony, and no better choice could have been made. The emigrants called him the Aaron, as they termed Cargill the Moses of this pilgrimage.

After a voyage of four months, anchor was cast in Otago harbour, and landing effected at a place which came to be known as Port Chalmers, in memory of the great Disruption leader. Proceeding a few miles up the inlet, the colonists made a clearance in the thick-spreading bush, and founded a city which they called Dunedin, the old Celtic name of Edinburgh. A church and manse were speedily built; in three years the population of the new city numbered 1600, of whom 1100 were Presbyterians; in 1854 a Presbytery was formed, and the map of the whole region round about was soon studded with Scotch names — Clutha, Dalhousie, Invercargill, Lammerlaw, etc. And though the colony has since then considerably changed its character—by the rush of gold-seekers and the arrival of those who did not sympathise with the religious ideals of the founders, this part of New Zealand has never lost the traces of its origin. The Presbyterian Church remains the leading denomination, and the work begun by the earnest men who brought with them the heritage of their fathers' faith and worship has yielded results that will only grow richer as time rolls onward.

After a good deal of negotiation, and some disappointment through delay, the two Presbyterian Churches in the north and south of the colony were happily united in 1901. Their combined strength eight years later was 210 congregations and 32,740 communicants. This Church is at present growing more rapidly than any of the others in New Zealand, and though one of the youngest is one

of the healthiest and most fruitful branches of a far-spreading tree.

See *Presbyterianism in the Colonies*, the fifth series of the Chalmers Lectures, by R. Gordon Balfour, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1899).



## CHAPTER XXVII.

### TO EARTH'S REMOTEST BOUND.

FOR more than three hundred years after the Reformation the Protestant Churches of Europe were struggling to hold their own in the countries where they were planted ; what strength they had to spare was given to caring for their members who went across the seas to settle in distant lands—in America, in India, and in the various Colonies. The missionary call to go and possess the whole world for Christ was not heard till nearly the end of the eighteenth century. The Presbyterian Churches were not quite the first to hear it, but they had been among the most active in colonial enterprise. Scotch people have always been specially fond of roaming to the uttermost parts of the earth, and to their credit be it said that they have generally carried their form of religion with them. So when they left the Old World to find homes in the New, they were true to the old faith and worship, and did not rest till ministers were sent out and sanctuaries built to meet their spiritual needs. Nor did they neglect altogether the savage tribes

that might be within reach of their efforts. The earliest Presbyterian Mission was to the Red Indians of America, and there never was a more heroic missionary than David Brainerd, who gave his life for this cause. He was chosen for the work by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and his ordination took place in 1744.

The idea, however, of sending the Gospel to all mankind as the bounden duty and privilege of the Church was long in being accepted and carried out. Though the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland enjoined the ministers whom it sent forth in 1699 with the expedition to found a colony on the Isthmus of Darien, to labour among the heathen also, the failure of that unhappy venture rather discouraged any further attempts. We have seen how nearly a hundred years later the same Assembly, under the leadership of the Moderates, declared Foreign Missions to be an absurdity so long as any heathen remained at home. Now it is safe to say that every branch of the Presbyterian family not only believes in preaching the Evangel of Jesus to the whole world, but is doing something to fulfil His great commission.

Missionary societies were formed in Glasgow, Edinburgh, London, and other places in which Presbyterian ministers and elders held an honoured place. Opinion ripened very rapidly, till in 1829, the Assembly, newly converted to the policy it had despised, resolved to send out Alexander Duff to India. Before that, others had

gone as pioneers, but now the Church was committed to the task. The Seceders followed suit, choosing Jamaica and Old Calabar as their fields; the Irish Presbyterians broke ground in India in 1840; in the same year the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists obeyed the call coming to them too from that land; in 1847 the English Presbyterians began their very successful work in China, though it should be remembered that Robert Morrison, the pioneer who went out as early as 1807, was of Presbyterian stock. At the Disruption the missionaries of the Church of Scotland cast in their lot with the Free Church, but new men went forth to represent the Auld Kirk, so that this breach in the unity of the Church at home really tended to increase the number of messengers from Scotland to the heathen world. The United Presbyterian Church, with its blending of Secession and Relief, also broadened out into a great missionary body, carrying on work in Rajputana and Manchuria as well as in Africa and the West Indies.

American Presbyterians were not behind those of the old country in responding to the new world-call. The Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, founded in 1810, had the support of Presbyterians at first besides that of Congregationalists, into whose hands it fell later on. But in due time each of the eight Presbyterian denominations mentioned in Chapter XXIV. came to realise its own responsibility for carrying the Gospel to mankind, with the result that a large part of the world is covered to-day by their mission stations. In Australasia,

too, there has in recent years been a growing missionary interest.

Presbyterians of the European continent have, as a rule, had too hard a fight to maintain themselves to be able to accomplish very much in the foreign field. Most of the work is done by societies, as in the early days of missionary enterprise in Great Britain and America. The Churches do not feel their direct responsibility as they ought. Still, some splendid results are being achieved by Dutch, German, French, and Swiss societies. Hungary does not yet take her proper share in the task.

Perhaps the best way to give a true idea of how far the Presbyterian Church has been faithful to this high trust, and has gone "to earth's remotest bound" at her Master's call, will be to look at the map of the world and try to trace what has been done—not to make it Presbyterian, a poor and unworthy ambition which will never be fulfilled, but to win the various races of men for Christ through Presbyterian missions.

We leave Europe out of account, for it professes to be Christian, though we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that its Christianity is too largely nominal. Ancient Churches must be revived, and, it may be, new Churches formed, if this continent is to keep the lead in missionary enterprise. At present it is from Britain and Ireland, joined in vital cords of sympathy with the kindred lands across the ocean, that the life-line is cast forth most successfully to all mankind.

Crossing the Mediterranean to Africa, we begin with Egypt, the venerable land of the Nile, where the Pyramids take us back to the very dawn of history, and where green fertility and arid desert stretch side by side. Mohammedanism holds the masses of the people in thrall, but the United Presbyterians of America are training thousands of children in their schools, and doing much to spread the light of truth. Recently they have extended their operations to the Soudan. We travel far south into the dark interior, and passing through the region of the great lakes find in Nyasaland, hallowed for ever by the memory of David Livingstone, flourishing Presbyterian missions from Scotland that are building up a brave and intelligent race of Christians. There and in Portuguese East Africa the Dutch Reformed Church is also actively at work. In Southern Rhodesia and the lands that form part of the South African Commonwealth we see a more or less advanced Christian civilisation born of the combined efforts of Boer and Briton — Dutch and Scotch Presbyterians uniting at last in a common task, and the dark-skinned population receiving in Lovedale and similar institutions an education that is transforming character and life.

Sailing round to the west coast, and passing the mouth of the Congo, we may venture up that mighty river and visit in the valley of the Kasai, one of its tributaries, a successful mission of the Southern Presbyterian Church of America, which claims to be the only centre of Gospel light in an area of 90,000 miles. Farther north in

Kamerun, now German territory, the American Presbyterian Board has done a wonderful work, 4000 Church members having been gathered in twenty-five years. In the Old Calabar region we rejoice in the fruits of many years' devoted labour, the mission founded by the United Presbyterians of Scotland, and sacred through the outpouring of martyr lives, being now the portal of promise and hope for a large part of British Nigeria.

From Africa we turn to Asia, and first to that portion of it from which the Gospel came to us. Syria, Palestine, and what remains of the Turkish Empire in the East, are lands for which the chief hope lies in an enlightened Christian education, and in influencing for good the Jew, now fast returning to his native soil. And the American Presbyterians by their schools and colleges, the United Free Church of Scotland by mission-stations on and near the shore of the Lake of Galilee and at Hebron, are doing not a little to change the face of these morning lands of history. The interior of Arabia is still almost closed territory, but at Aden the grave of Ion Keith-Falconer, pioneer Scottish missionary, tells us that this stronghold of Islam has been valiantly claimed for Christ. The Reformed Church of America has occupied points bordering on the Persian Gulf, and the Presbyterian Church in the United States is responsible for evangelising one-third of Persia itself.

India, a continent in size, and one of the greatest battlefields in the war with heathenism, now calls for notice. What are Presbyterians doing here? If William

Carey, the great Baptist, led the way to its conquest for our most holy faith, Alexander Duff, the Presbyterian educationist, deserves the second place of honour in its missionary annals. Now, north and south, east and west, Presbyterians work in harmony with other evangelical labourers in heralding the dawn for these dusky subjects of our vast Eastern empire. In Calcutta old divisions have been healed, and to-day there is but one Scottish Christian College. And in South India, Congregationalists and Presbyterians have united "to develop a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating Church for India, which shall present a united front of living testimony to Christ, and worthily represent to the world the Christian ideal." At Madras the great Christian College founded by William Miller is a glowing centre of light placed against a dark background of Hinduism.

Between India and China lies the land of Siam, with nearly seven millions of people, where the Presbyterians of America have the field almost entirely to themselves. Along the preparatory lines of education and medical mission work their success has been remarkable.

In China, the forces of all the Churches are as yet sadly inadequate to the mighty task of occupying for Christ one-twelfth of the habitable globe, and preaching the Evangel to 400 millions of men. But the Presbyterians are at least aware of the tremendous issues at stake, and are nerving themselves to meet the present crisis—doors open wide on every hand, and a people more



eager to receive the truth than we are to send it to them. The American Churches in a variety of fields, the Scotch and Irish in the north (Manchuria), the English Presbyterians in the south, are well organised for the "uplift of China" from the low levels of the past to high standards of Christian thought and life. Here too there is a fine object-lesson in unity. The Presbyterian Church of Christ in China now stands forth as an eightfold army of attack. Three bodies in the United States, one in Canada, one in England, two in Scotland, one in Ireland, have formed in line for the fray, seeking to bear their part worthily in the peaceful winning of the great Eastern republic for Our Lord.

The island of Formosa, once Chinese, now a trophy of Japan's victory over her rival, is divided between English and Canadian Presbyterians in the missionary plan of campaign. Their forces are closely united, and a rich harvest of results is being reaped among a responsive population. This is regarded as the special field of the children of the Presbyterian Church of England, and is supported by their contributions.

Japan was early occupied by Presbyterian missionaries after its opening to the rest of the world in 1868. To-day the largest Church in the Mikado's empire is the Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai—the Church of Christ in Japan. That is the broad and comprehensive name that the Presbyterians in this wonderful country have chosen for themselves. They have a membership of about 20,000, and aim at being both self-supporting and self-governing.

In 1911 they entered into a federation with the Congregational and Methodist Churches.

In Korea, now a province of Japan under the name of Chosen, we can study one of the miracles of modern missions, and it has happened in connection with the work of the American Presbyterians. In 1887 seven Koreans gathered behind closed doors for the first observance of the Lord's Supper in the city of Seoul. To-day there are fully 200,000 in the province who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Saviour. At least a half of these belong to the American Presbyterian Mission. The congregation of the parent church in Phyeng-yang numbers 2500, so that the men and women have to meet separately, and the mid-week prayer-meeting, with its average attendance of 1100, is perhaps the biggest of its kind in the world.

The Dutch East Indies, or the Malay Archipelago, is pre-eminently the field of the missionary societies of Holland, and as Holland is mainly Presbyterian this great region of more than 43 millions of people may be reckoned among the Presbyterian spheres of influence. More than three-fourths of the inhabitants are Moham-medans, and Islam is very active in making converts. There are over one hundred Dutch missionaries at work, all too few for the need.

The Philippine Islands, since their conquest by the United States, have become the scene of vigorous American missionary enterprise, in which Presbyterians take a good share.

We are now afloat on the Pacific, approaching that island-studded expanse known as Oceania. Steering in the first place towards the New Hebrides, we reach the special field of Dr. J. G. Paton, the devoted Reformed Presbyterian missionary, whose autobiography is as thrilling in interest as any novel. In the carrying on of the work here, Scottish and Canadian Presbyterians co-operate with the Presbyterians of Australia. There has already been gathered into the Christian Church more than a fourth of the 90,000 natives. The lovely isles of the Pacific were among the earliest fields of missionary effort, and the Gospel has won in them some of its most astonishing triumphs.

Our voyage takes us last of all to the Western Hemisphere, and here the conditions of missionary work are quite different. North America is not only Christian but aggressively so. Indians and Eskimos are the sole remaining peoples to be evangelised, and the Presbyterian Churches regard work among them as a branch of their Home Missions. The West Indies with their negro inhabitants, bearing traces still of the long reign of slavery, were chosen as the scene of some of the first Scottish Presbyterian Missions, and in Jamaica and other islands that work continues to this day.

South America, "the neglected continent," presents the most serious missionary problem of the New World. It does not contain many heathen in the strict sense of the term, but Romanism of the most corrupt and degraded kind holds an almost universal sway, and there are many

thousands of Indians who still cling to the worship of ancestors and of the soul. The Presbyterian Churches of North America are feeling more and more the awful burden of this immense and important field, so near to them in many ways, crying out like Macedonia of old for help in its bondage. In Colombia, Chili, and Brazil they have missions at work among the South American people, and great possibilities exist here for the future. In Brazil there are already two independent and fully organised Presbyterian Churches.

Such is a brief outline of what Presbyterians are doing to carry the Gospel to the non-Christian world. It is only part of the enormous task assigned to the whole Church of God, yet a part not unworthy of their history and traditions. Figures must of necessity be incomplete, but it would appear that the Presbyterian Churches of the world have not less than 7000 agents in the foreign field, that about 400,000 communicants are gathered together in 8500 congregations and mission-stations, nearly 300,000 pupils in their 6000 schools and colleges, and at least half a million pounds sterling raised in the home Churches for the support of missionary schemes.

We know of no book that attempts to give a complete view of Presbyterian Foreign Missions, but each denomination has its own literature, some of it very attractive. The *Reports of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference* (1910) have furnished much material for the above survey, read in connection with the *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions*, published the same year.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### ONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

OUR history has taken us over many lands, and given us glimpses of many Churches. Yet one thread has been running through all. We have seen how the Presbyterian type of Christianity has found its way into nearly every part of the known world, and how a certain family likeness is to be traced among the various scattered members of the same body. But it is only in recent times, when the world has become smaller by better communication between its parts, and more intimate friendship among its people, that the vision of one Church of this order has shone out clearly before the eyes of men. For a long while Presbyterians thought too much of the things in which they differed, and too little of the things that made them one. They were too fond of splitting off from each other on minor points, and not very keen about marching together as one great regiment in the common army of our Lord.

The nineteenth century was drawing to a close when

the project of bringing the Presbyterian Churches into a visible unity began to take shape. After it had been spoken about a good deal in America and in Great Britain, a conference was held in London in 1875 at which plans were laid for a General Presbyterian Alliance to which there should be admitted "any Church holding the supreme authority of the Scriptures in matters of faith and morals, and whose creed was in harmony with the consensus (agreement) of the Reformed Confessions." The constitution was made wide enough to include those Churches which did not call themselves Presbyterian but nevertheless adhered to the principles of the Reformation under Calvin. Of course we have made advance in many ways since Calvin's time, but it should ever be remembered that we owe to him the idea of a free Church of Jesus Christ delivered from the yoke of Rome and organised according to the teaching of God's Spirit through His Word. Therefore the simplest way of uniting Presbyterian folk all over the world seemed to be to lead them back to the memory of these days when their fathers were not afraid to break away from the Pope's tyranny to confess the faith and observe the order that they drew directly from the Bible.

So the first Pan (All)-Presbyterian Council assembled in St. Giles's Cathedral, Edinburgh, on 3rd July 1877. No place could be more suitable for such a gathering. Scotland, of all countries in the world, gave the best object-lesson of the winning of a nation for Presbyterianism, and her capital had been the scene of the

most striking events in the history of the national religion. In old St. Giles's John Knox had thundered, Jenny Geddes had flung her stool, General Assemblies had met to settle questions of the highest importance. To-day it stands out in fairer beauty and glory than at any time since the Reformation, all glorious within because of the work of restoration carried on by Sir William Chambers and others. It is now something like a Westminster Abbey in the Scottish metropolis, a monumental shrine in which the famous men and women of the nation are commemorated, and to which living people turn whenever their deepest feelings of patriotism and piety seek full expression.

There, and afterwards in the Free Assembly Hall—another rallying place not only of the tribes of Presbyterianism, but of the Christian forces of all lands, for it was the scene of the World Missionary Conference of 1910—the Council held its sessions, and a movement was inaugurated which has done much to realise the ideal of “one Presbyterian Church.” Sixteen continental Churches were represented, nine from the United Kingdom, eight from the United States of America, as well as Canada, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and many mission fields. Prominent leaders were there, most of whom have now passed away—McCosh of Princeton, Hall, Paxton, and Schaff of New York, Cairns, Calderwood, Flint, MacGregor, and Rainy of Edinburgh, Dykes of London, Pressensé of Paris, Godet of Neuchâtel, Caven of Toronto, Watts of Belfast, with



others scarcely less celebrated. It is interesting to note among those happily still alive (1913) Lord Balfour of Burleigh, John Wanamaker of Philadelphia, and Alexander Whyte of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, with last, not least, Dr. George Mathews, to whom, as the grand old man of Presbyterianism and almost the last survivor of a distinguished generation of divines, we venture to dedicate this little volume. To him as secretary of the Alliance it has fallen to guide its fortunes all these years.

The Presbyterian Alliance was never intended to lay down the law for the Churches included in it. The idea of its founders was to give opportunity to its members to meet together from time to time to consult with one another on matters affecting them all and touching the Kingdom of Christ everywhere, to collect information as to the Churches of the Presbyterian family throughout the world, and to bind them more closely in the unity of a common purpose. With such ends in view Councils have been held at intervals of three or four years in different world-centres. Since 1877 the Alliance has thus visited Philadelphia, Belfast, London, Toronto, Glasgow, Washington, Liverpool, New York, and Aberdeen. Other Churches have followed this example. Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, and Congregationalists have met in similar world-conferences, and have felt more truly one within their several folds. The next step will be for all to pass over these barriers into the unity of the one flock.

Meanwhile we must be content with understanding ourselves better, in order some day to reach a larger understanding with other Christians. There are Presbyterian angles that need to be rubbed off before we can fit in well with our neighbours, and that applies all round. Already we see that with all the perplexing variety still existing there is a deep underlying unity. And indirectly the Alliance has done much to bring this out. During the years since its formation Presbyterian union has advanced very rapidly. In Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, and many of the mission fields, Churches have abandoned their separate constitutions, and been merged in larger bodies, so that it may be said generally that in the new countries, and to a lesser extent in the old lands, Presbyterianism is being more and more recognised as one, outwardly as well as inwardly.

Perhaps the best work accomplished by the Alliance has been the help and encouragement given to the weaker and more remote branches of the Presbyterian stock. The struggling remnants in Belgium, Bohemia, and Italy have been made to feel part of a greater whole; the distant Church of Hungary has been knit again into fellowship with her spiritual kith and kin. And the link of union has also been good for the powerful English-speaking Churches that now stretch from ocean to ocean. The future lies largely with them; but they cannot afford to forget the ties of gratitude and service that bind them to the past and to their weaker brethren.

At present eighty-three Churches and Missions are reckoned as belonging more or less intimately to the general Presbyterian body. These include twenty-two on the continent of Europe, thirteen in the United Kingdom, eleven in Asia, eleven in Africa, seventeen in North America, three in South America, three in Australasia, one in the West Indies. The total as given in the last published report of the Alliance (1909) is, 32,984 congregations and 5,716,666 communicants. And this is an underestimate, as it is impossible to get complete figures over so wide an area. We may say, however, with confidence that there must be a world-Presbyterian population of at least 30 million souls.

What are the things that make Presbyterians one? Let a member of the clan try to answer the question.

We adhere in substance to the same evangelical *creed*. With us the Word of God is the supreme rule of faith and duty. We believe the Reformers were right when they set aside the vain traditions of men, and went back to the Bible as the one safe guide, to trust in Christ alone as the Way of salvation. While we reverence Calvin and other wise divines, we own no man as Master but Jesus, and most of us hold as strongly as the Pilgrim Fathers that "The Lord has still more light and truth to break forth from His Holy Word." We give an honoured place to the Confessions and Catechisms which have taught our people from age to age to think high thoughts about God, and to keep His commandments. We are one in accepting the same plan of

*Church government*, for we can go back to early Christian times and find there its beginnings, while experience has proved that no Church system is so well fitted to secure both liberty and order. We cannot forget that wherever the Reformation had free course it took a Presbyterian form, and we see to-day how in all lands that form suits itself readily to human needs. We stand also for a certain type of *worship*. Not the priest at the altar, but the minister in the pulpit, reveals to us the things of God. We hold that all believers are priests, called to take part in divine service. So we feel bound to maintain the witness of our fathers against forms of worship that are contrary to the plain teaching of God's Word. Enter almost any Presbyterian church, and you will note the prominence given to the preaching of the Gospel—to the free exercise of prayer—to the offering of praise as an act of the whole congregation. There has been advance in our worship. It is no longer so bald and colourless as in former days. Many of us have learned to use aids that were once regarded as dangerous innovations, and we do not yet see eye to eye on all points of ritual. But the simple and solemn Presbyterian service still seems to us the golden mean between two extremes—the elaborate ceremony of the Roman and Anglican Churches on the one hand, and the careless slovenliness sometimes seen in other denominations. And while we take no high and exclusive view of the Christian ministry, we have great faith in setting apart an able and learned as well as a pious body of men to

be pastors and teachers of the Church. This has been our strength in the past, and ought to be our wisdom for the future. Is it too much to hope that the reading of these pages may inspire some ardent young souls to prepare to join the glorious cloud of witnesses, and so to do something, by God's help, in the days to come that will not be unworthy of our history?

In nothing, perhaps, are we so truly one as in the observance of the Lord's Supper according to our venerable rite. There is a beautiful distinctiveness about a Presbyterian Communion. The Message of the Cross first expounded from the pulpit—the ministers and elders grouped around the Holy Table—the people receiving the bread and wine from the hands of the men they have themselves solemnly chosen to bear the vessels of the Lord—the quiet atmosphere of prayer and meditation—the singing of psalm, paraphrase, and hymn, with their tender associations—the children looking on, the Christ felt to be indeed in the midst,—have we not here more than the unity of a single Church, a very near approach to unity in the Master Himself?

So the true-blue Presbyterian in such a hallowed hour will gladly echo the words of the Bishop in Walter C. Smith's fine poem:—

I love the kirk, with ages hoar;  
I love old ways, but Christ far more;  
I love the fold, I love the flock,  
But more my Shepherd and my Rock,  
And the great Book of grace  
That mirrors His dear face.

See the various Reports of the Presbyterian Alliance, from 1877 onwards: apply to Rev. Dr. Mathews, Brondesbury, London. A very convenient volume is that by Rev. W. M. Macphail, *The Presbyterian Church: its Doctrine, Worship, and Polity* (London, 1907). For a simple explanation of Presbyterian worship, written for young people, see a little book by Rev. F. W. Anderson, published by T. F. Downie, Presbyterian Publications Department, London, 1912.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE.

WE have now come to the last chapter of our history. Our thoughts have been dwelling on one branch of Christ's Church, but we must not forget that there are other branches, and that all are needed to complete the living Vine. Or, to take another figure, the Body of Christ has many members, and each member has its office to fulfil. In these days we have learned to believe that no one denomination has all the truth within itself, that each real society of Christians has been formed by God for a special purpose—to set forth some view of truth and duty that was in danger of being obscured. Long ago people thought that there was only one type of Church to be allowed on earth, and we have had sad proof in the course of our story how good men persecuted those who differed from them in their ideas of what the Church should be.

The Presbyterians of old were little better than others in this respect, and just because they were so sure that their system was the best and the most Scriptural, they



wished it to be the only system, and tried to put down Episcopacy, Independency, and the rest. It did not occur to them that nearly every form of Church government that has come into being in the world has had something to say for itself—something in human nature, and something in God's plan for the education of the race. This does not mean that one was just as good as another, but it does mean that now after they have all been tested we should look forward to a larger and better kind of Church than any of them, a Church of the future that will absorb into itself all the pure and true elements we can find in the Church of the past and present.

God has been teaching us in the recent history of the world how nations must become conscious of themselves before international peace and unity are possible. We have seen within the last century a new France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan—Australia, Canada, South Africa, awaking one by one to national life—the vast empire of China transformed into a democratic state—and quite lately the Balkan countries coming to their own. But these movements are only preparatory to a new and better world; the makings and re-makings of nations are bound in the end to lead to a larger unity, a brotherhood of all in one, a holy internationalism.

And what is true of nations is true also of Churches. The rise, the growth, the success of denominations, is not God's last word, but points to something greater—

the completed contribution of the parts to the whole, the establishment of a truly catholic fellowship. So, while we thankfully trace the Divine hand in the preservation of the Presbyterian Church we do not deny that the same process has been at work in all the Churches, with the same end in view—the building of a new and a more glorious Jerusalem that will include every Christian soul in joyous citizenship.

It therefore remains but to sum up in a few words what we think the story of these pages teaches as to the things that cannot be shaken, that must be the firm foundations of the great united Church of the ages yet to be.

*Evangelical truth* must be the rock on which it stands. No Church can win and keep the hearts of men that is not based on a Divine Saviour and His Gospel of Grace. Ancient creeds may change their form, but to the substance of the faith once delivered to the saints we must ever cling if there is to be life and power in our witness.

*Freedom combined with order* must be an essential note in the Church of the future. For freedom to believe, to worship, and to testify, our fathers made immense sacrifices, defying the might of man in their utter dependence on God. We dare not surrender the precious heritage they thus purchased for us. No yoke of bondage must again entangle us; we need and we have a law under which to live and work, but it is a law of liberty.

*A world-wide mission* must be our inspired and inspir-

ing ideal—not to paint the map one ecclesiastical colour, but to carry the message of the Cross to every nation and people and kindred and tongue—not to compel men into one narrow fold, but to draw them into the one flock under the care of the one Shepherd.

So the Bush, burning yet not consumed, will in time give place to a larger symbol—Jesus walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Then the Heavenly Temple will begin to take shape on earth, and our poor handiwork be caught up into the majestic sweep of God's purpose, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ." And it is a poet of the Presbyterian Church, George Matheson, the blind minister with so clear a vision of Divine Truth, who puts this great thought into a prayer to the Love that will not let us go—

Gather us in, Thou Love that fillest all,  
Gather our rival faiths within Thy fold,  
Rend each man's temple veil and bid it fall  
That we may know that Thou hast been of old ;  
Gather us in.

Gather us in ; we worship only Thee ;  
In varied names we stretch a common hand ;  
In diverse forms a common soul we see ;  
In many ships we seek one spirit-land ;  
Gather us in.

Each sees one colour of Thy rainbow-light,  
Each looks upon one tint and calls it heaven ;  
Thou art the fulness of our partial sight ;  
We are not perfect till we find the seven ;  
Gather us in.

## INDEX.

- Aden, 204.  
 Africa, Presbyterian Missions in, 203.  
 Africa, South, 190-192.  
 Aidan, 16.  
 à Lasco, John, 151.  
 Alcock, books by Deborah, 25, 56.  
 Alps, Israel of the, 43.  
 Alva, Duke of, 38, 39.  
 America, Presbyterianism in  
   North, 171-188.  
   South, 208-209.  
 Anderson, F. W., 218.  
 Anti-Burghers, 105.  
 Antwerp, martyrs at, 35.  
 Anvil, Church of the, 28, 31.  
 Arabia, 204.  
 Argyll, Marquis of, 92.  
 Arminius, 41.  
 Arnaud, Henri, 47.  
 Asia, 204.  
 Assembly, General, 9; first in  
   Scotland, 67.  
   notable meetings, 74, 84,  
     100, 103, 108, 109, 111,  
     115, 116, 140.  
   in Ireland, 150.  
   in United States, 174, 177.  
 Atlantic City, 177.  
 Atonement Controversy, 128.  
 "Auld Lights," 112, 120.  
 Australia, Presbyterianism in,  
   192-195.
- Baillie, Robert, 87, 89.  
 Bala, 165, 167.  
 Balfour of Burleigh, Lord, 70,  
   213.  
 Balsille, 47.  
 Banners of Covenant, 89-90.  
 Bartholomew, Massacre of St.,  
   29, 30.  
 Bartholomew's Day, Black, 154.  
 Basel, 20.  
 Baxter, Richard, 155.  
 Beaton, Cardinal, 64.  
 Beggars of the Sea, 38, 39.  
 Belfast, 149.  
 Belgium, 42.  
 Bernard of Clairvaux, 15.  
 Bersier, 32.  
 Berwick-on-Tweed, 65, 130, 131.  
 Beza, Theodore, 24.  
 Bible Society, 165, 166.  
 Bishops—in Early Church, 10,  
   13.  
   in Rome, etc., 13, 14.  
   in Scotland, 74, 75, 78, 92,  
   100.  
 Blair, Dr. W., 135.  
 "Bluidy Banner," 90.  
 Boers, 191.  
 Bohemia, Presbyterianism in,  
   49-56.  
 Bonar, Andrew and Horatius,  
   119.  
 Boot torture, 93.  
 Boston, Thomas, 101.

- Bothwell Bridge, battle of, 95.  
 Boyne, battle of the, 147.  
 Brainerd, David, 200.  
 Brazil, Presbyterianism in, 209.  
 Brechin, 111.  
 Brown, Prof. Hume, 70.  
   Dr. James, 135.  
   John (Broughton Place), 133.  
   John (Haddington), 111.  
   John (author of *Rab and his Friends*), 133.  
   Dr. Thomas, 120.  
 Bruce, Prof. A. B., 119.  
   Dr. J. Collingwood, 159.  
 Buchanan, Dr. Robert, 119.  
 Budapest, 57.  
 Bunyan, John, 3.  
 Burghers, 105.  
 Burns, Robert, 110.  
   Rev. Thos., 196.  
   William C., 159.  
 Bush, Burning, 1-6.
- Caird, Principal John, 125.  
 Cairns, Principal John, 129-135, 212.  
 Calabar, Old, 204.  
 Calcutta, 205.  
 Calderwood, Prof. H., 134, 212.  
 Calvin, John, 18-25.  
 Calvinistic Methodists, 167.  
 Cambridge, 152, 159.  
 Cameron, Richard, 95.  
 Cameronians, 95, 103, 175.  
 Campbell, John Macleod, 128.  
 Canada, Presbyterianism in, 180-188.  
 Candlish, Dr. R. S., 119.  
 Canterbury, French Presbyterianism in, 31.  
 Canton, William, 16.  
 Cargill, Captain, 196.  
 Carlyle, Thomas, 63.  
 Carrickfergus, 145.  
 Carstares, William, 100.  
 Cartwright, Thomas, 152.  
 Catechism, Shorter, 86.
- Catherine of Siena, 15.  
 Caven, Principal, 212.  
 Chalmers, Dr. Thomas, 114-118, 120.  
 Chambers, Sir Wm., 212.  
 Channel Islands, 152.  
 Charles I., King, 78, 87, 153.  
   II., King, 90, 155.  
   V., Emperor, 34, 35.  
 Charles, books by Mrs. Rundle, 17, 25.  
 Charles, Thomas, of Bala, 165, 167, 169.  
 Charteris, Dr. A. H., 126, 127.  
 Children's Bond, 97.  
 China, Presbyterian Missions in, 205.  
 Claverhouse, 96.  
 Coligny, Gaspard de, 28-30.  
   Louise de, 40.  
 Columba, 16, 143.  
 Columbus, 170.  
 Comba, Prof., 49.  
 Comenius, 52, 53.  
 Communion, Presbyterian, 217.  
 Confession of Faith, Westminster, 86, 126, 132, 138, 149, 176.  
 Connor, Ralph (Rev. C. W. Gordon), 188.  
 Constance, Council of, 51.  
 Conventicles, 92.  
 Cooke, Dr. Henry, 148.  
*Cottar's Saturday Night*, 111.  
 Covenant, literature of, 82, 98.  
 Covenant, National, 80.  
 Covenant, Solemn League and, 86.  
 Covenanters, Scottish, 79-101.  
 Cowan, Prof. H., 66, 70.  
 Craw, Paul, 64.  
 Creeds, of the Church, 15, 35, 215, 221.  
 Crockett, S. R., books by, 33, 98.  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 46, 87, 89.  
 Cumberland Presbyterians, 176.

- Cunningham, Dr. J. C., 106.  
 Cunningham, Principal William, 119.  
 Cup, Book and the, 56.
- Dalziel, General, 96.  
 Dante, 15, 17.  
 Darien expedition, 200.  
 D'Aubigne, Dr. Merle, 61.  
 David, Christian, 53.  
 Davidson, Prof. A. B., 119.  
 Davidson, Thomas, 135.  
 Davies, Howell, 163.  
 Deacons in Early Church, 10.  
 Debreczen, 60.  
 Declaratory Acts, 132, 138.  
 Defoe, Daniel, 155.  
 Delft, 39.  
 Derry, siege of, 147, 150.  
 Disestablishment — in France, 32.  
     agitation in Scotland, 125, 132.  
     of Irish Episcopal Church, 146.  
 Disruption, 116, 117.  
 Dods, Marcus, 119.  
 Dort, Synod of, 41.  
 Doyle, Conan, 33.  
 Drumclog, battle of, 94.  
 Drummond, Henry, 119.  
 Drysdale, Dr. A. H., 160.  
 Duff, Alexander, 109, 119, 200.  
 Dunedin, founding of, 197.  
 Dutch Republic, rise of, 39, 42.  
 Dutch in North America, 171.  
     in East Indies, 207.  
     in South Africa, 190.  
 Dykes, Dr. J. Oswald, 212.
- Eadie, Dr. John, 134, 135.  
 East Indies, Presbyterian Missions in, 207.  
 Edinburgh, 67-69, 79-81, 92, 93, 96, 116, 138, 211, 212.  
 Edward VI., King, 65, 66, 151.
- Edwards, Jonathan, 173.  
 Edwards, Lewis and T. C., 167.  
 Egypt, Presbyterian Missions in, 203.  
 Elders in Early Church, 9.  
 Elizabeth, Queen, 152.  
 Emblems of Presbyterian Church, 5, 6.  
 England, Presbyterians in, 151-160.  
 Episcopacy — in Scotland, 74, 75, 78, 92, 100.  
     in Ireland, 145-148.  
     in England, 153.  
     in Wales, 164.  
 Established Church of Scotland —after Disruption, 121-127.  
     moving for Union, 141-142.  
 Evangelicals, 108-109, 114-118.  
 Evangelical Union, 129.  
*Evangeline*, 181.
- Fairbairn, Principal (Oxford), 111.  
 Falkland Palace, 75.  
 Fisher, James, of Kinclaven, 103.  
 Fleming, Dr. Hay, 82, 90.  
 Flint, Prof. R., 126, 212.  
 Foreign Missions, 108, 109, 124, 133, 199-209.  
 Formosa, 206.  
 France, Presbyterianism in, 26-33.  
 Francis of Assisi, 15, 17.  
 Francis I., King of France, 26.  
 Free Church of Scotland, 116-120, 137, 138.  
 Free Presbyterian Church, 138.  
 Freedom of Church, 221.  
 French Canada, 184.
- Gairney Bridge, 103, 104.  
 Galt, John, 70, 98.  
 Geddes, Jenny, 79.  
 Geneva, 19, 20-25, 66, 73.

- Geneva Bible, 24.  
 Geneva Psalter, 24.  
 Germany, Presbyterianism in, 57.  
 Gillespie, George, 57.  
 Gillespie, Thomas, 109.  
 Gladstone, W. E., 117, 169.  
 Glasgow, 84, 114, 124.  
 Glorious Return of Waldenses, 47.  
 Godet, Prof., 61, 212.  
*Good Words*, 123.  
 Gordon, James, 147.  
 Government in Early Church, 9, 10.  
 Government, Presbyterian, 216.  
 Greece, 62.  
 Greyfriars, Edinburgh, 81, 95.  
 Grierson of Lagg, 96.  
 Grotius, 41.  
 Guilds, 126.  
 Guthrie, James, 92.  
 Guthrie, Dr. Thomas, 119.  
*Guy Mannering*, 108.  
 Haddington, 63.  
 Haggard, H. Rider, 42.  
 Hamilton, Dr. James, 159.  
 Hamilton, Marquis of, 85.  
 Hamilton, Patrick, 63.  
 Hamilton, Dr. Thomas, 150.  
 Hampton Court, 152.  
 Hanna, Dr. W., 120.  
 Hannay, Dean, 79.  
 Harris, Howell, 162, 163.  
 Heidelberg Catechism, 61, 62, 171.  
 Henderson, Alexander, 85, 87.  
 Henry VIII., King, 151.  
 Henry of Navarre, 29, 30.  
 Herrnhut, 53.  
 Highlands, Scottish, 138.  
 Hislop, Andrew, 96.  
 Holland, Presbyterianism in, 34-42.  
 Holyrood, 68.  
 Horton, Dr., on Early Church, 11.  
 Huguenots, 28-33.  
 Hungary, Presbyterianism in, 57-60.  
 Huntingdon, Countess of, 164.  
 Hus, John, 16, 51, 56.  
 Hutton, Dr. G. C., 134.  
 Hymns, 112, 141, 149, 163.  
 India, Presbyterian Missions in, 214, 215.  
 Indians, Red, 200.  
 Inglis, Dr. John, 109.  
*Institutes*, Calvin's, 20, 22.  
 Iona, 143.  
 Ireland, Presbyterianism in, 142-150.  
 Irving, Edward, 159.  
 Israel of the Alps, 43.  
 Italy, Presbyterianism in, 48, 49.  
 Jamaica, 208.  
 James, VI. of Scotland, I. of England, 74-76, 77, 78, 152.  
 James II., 96, 146, 147.  
 Janavel, 46.  
 Japan, Presbyterian Missions in, 206.  
 Jeffreys, Judge, 155.  
 Jenkins, D. E., 169.  
 Jerome of Prague, 51.  
 Jerusalem Chamber, 86.  
 Johnston, Archibald, of Warriston, 67, 92.  
 Jones, Mary, 166.  
 Keith-Falconer, Ion, 119, 204.  
 Ker, Dr. John, 134.  
 Kildonan, Canada, 187.  
 Killing Time, 96.  
 Kilmany, 114.  
 Knowles, R. G., 188.  
 Knox, John, 62-70, 151, 152.  
 Korea, 207.



- Lang, J. Dunmore, 193.  
 Laud, Archbishop, 78, 79, 145.  
 Lee, Dr. Robert, 125.  
 Lefèvre, 26.  
 Leighton, Robert, 93, 94.  
 Leyden, 39, 41.  
 Lindsay, books by Principal  
     T. M., 11, 25.  
 Liverpool, 158, 159.  
 Livingstone, David, 203.  
 London, 75, 86, 159, 166.  
 Lords, House of—Judgment in  
     Scottish Church case, 139–  
     141.  
 Louis XIV., King, 30, 46.  
 Lovedale, South Africa, 203.  
 Luther, Martin, 18, 34.  
 Lyons, Poor Men of, 44.  
  
 M'Cosh, Dr. James, 212.  
 M'Crie, Dr. Thomas, 70, 98.  
 MacEwen, books by Prof.,  
     106, 135.  
 MacGregor, Dr. James, 212.  
 Mackail, Hugh, 93.  
 Mackenzie, Francis, 172.  
 Macleod, Dr. Norman, 122–124,  
     127.  
 Macphail, W. M., 218.  
 Madras, 205.  
 Magdalen Chapel, Edinburgh,  
     67.  
 Magus Moor, 94.  
 Magyars, 57–60.  
 Manchuria, 206.  
 Margaret of Valois, 26.  
*Marrow of Modern Divinity*,  
     101, 102.  
 Martyrs in various lands, 30,  
     35, 38, 39, 45, 46, 51, 52,  
     54, 58, 64, 75, 92–98, 145,  
     154, 155.  
 Mary, Queen of Scots, 68.  
 Mass, the, 14.  
 Matheson, Dr. George, 222.  
 Mathews, Dr. G. D., 62, 213,  
     218.  
  
 Meiklejohn, Dr. John, 194.  
 Melville, Andrew, 71–76.  
 Melville, James, 72.  
 Methodism, 156, 157.  
     in Wales, 164.  
     in Canada, 187.  
 Miller, Hugh, 119.  
 Miller, Dr. William, 205.  
 Milton, John, 46.  
 Missions, *see* Foreign Missions.  
 Moderates, 107, 111, 116, 148.  
 Moderators, 85, 100, 116, 138,  
     172.  
 Moncrieff, Alexander, 103.  
 Moravian Church and Missions,  
     53, 54, 56.  
 Morison, James, founder of  
     E. U. Church, 128.  
 Morrison, Robert, missionary,  
     201.  
 Morton, Regent, 69.  
*Motley's Dutch Republic*, 35, 42.  
 Muir, Dr. Macadam, 106.  
  
 Nantes, Edict of, 30.  
 Napoleon I., 31.  
 Navarre, Henry of, 29, 30.  
*Nec tamen consumeatur*, 2.  
 Netherlands, 34–42.  
 Newcastle-on-Tyne, 65, 159.  
 New Hebrides, 208.  
 New South Wales, 192.  
 New York, 208.  
 New Zealand, Presbyterianism  
     in, 195–198.  
 Nonconformists, 155.  
 Norway, Presbyterianism in, 61,  
     62.  
 Nova Scotia, Presbyterian pion-  
     eers in, 181.  
 Noyon, Picardy, 19.  
 Nyasaland, 203.  
  
 Oceania, 208.  
 Ogilvie, Dr. J. N., on Presby-  
     terian Churches, xiii.  
*Old Mortality*, 93.

- Orange, William I. of, 36-40, 42.  
 Orange, William III. of, 40, 98-100, 146, 147, 156.  
 Order of Church, 216, 221.  
 Organs, 42, 125, 137, 149.  
 Original Secession, 128, 136.  
 Owen, Daniel, of Mold, 168.  
 Oxford, 159.
- Palestine, Presbyterian Missions in, 204.  
 Pan-Presbyterian Council, 211-213.  
 Paraphrases, 111.  
 Paris, 26, 27-29.  
 Paton, Dr. J. G., 208.  
 Patrick, St., 16, 142.  
 Patronage, Law of, 101, 106, 115, 124, 125.  
 Penn, William, 172.  
 Perth, Five Articles of, 78.  
 Philadelphia, 172-174.  
 Philip II. of Spain, 36-39.  
 Philippine Islands, 207.  
 Piedmont, 42-49.  
 Pilgrim Fathers, 170, 215.  
*Pilgrim's Progress*, 3.  
 Plymouth Rock, 170.  
 Poitiers, 73.  
 Poland, 62, 151.  
*Pollok's Tales of the Covenanters*, 98.  
 Pope, the, 14.  
 Prague, 51, 55.  
 Praying Societies, 103.  
 Presbyterian origins, 6-11.  
   developments under Calvin, 22.  
   under Knox, 68.  
   under Melville, 74.  
   at Revolution, 100.  
   Alliance, 211-215.  
 Presbytery, 9.  
 Pressensé, Dr. E., 212.  
 Princeton, 173.  
 Protesters, 88.
- Psalmody, Presbyterian, 24, 87.  
 Puritanism, 71, 152, 162.
- Queensland, 193.
- Rab and his Friends*, 133.  
 Rainy, Principal, 112, 119, 138, 139, 142, 212.  
 Reade, Charles, 17.  
 Reformation, Protestant, 18, 20-25, 26-30, 34-40, 45, 58, 63-69, 144, 151, 152, 160, 161.  
 Reformed Church, 62; in America, 171, 175.  
 Reformed Presbyterians, 103, 136, 175, 176.  
 Regium Donum, 146, 148.  
 Relief Church, 109, 110, 112, 129.  
 Renwick, James, 98.  
 Resolutioners, 88.  
 Revolution of 1688-89, 98, 99.  
 Revolution of 1789 in France, 31, 112.  
*Rhys Lewis*, 169.  
*Ringan Gilhaize*, 70, 98.  
 Robertson, James (Canada), 185-187.  
 Robertson, James (Ellon), 122, 127.  
 Robertson, Principal W., 108.  
 Robertson, W. B., of Irvine, 135, 136.  
*Robinson Crusoe*, 155.  
*Rob Roy*, 84.  
 Rowlands, Daniel, 163.  
 Rullion Green, battle of, 93.  
 Rutherford, Samuel, 87.
- Sanquhar declaration, 95.  
 Savoy, dukes of, 24, 45-48.  
 Scotland, Presbyterianism in, 63-143.  
 Scott, Sir Walter, xii, 70, 76, 84, 93, 108.  
 Sea-Beggars, 38, 39, 42.

- Secession in Scotland, 102-106.  
in Ireland, 148-149.  
in England, 158.  
in America, 176.  
in Canada, 181.
- Sedan, 76.
- Servetus, 23.
- Session, Kirk-, 9.
- Sharp, Archbishop, 94.
- Siam, Presbyterian Missions in, 205.
- Smellie, books by Dr. A., 62, 76, 82.
- Smith, Prof. Robertson, 119.
- Smith, Dr. Walter C., 119, 217.
- Spain, 62.
- St. Andrews, 64, 72, 73.
- St. Giles's, Edinburgh, 68, 79-80, 211, 212.
- St. Margaret's, Westminster, 86.
- Stanley, Dean, 112.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis, 19, 114.
- Stewart, Dr. James, of Lovedale, 119.
- Story, Dr. R. H., 125.
- Strathesk, books by John, 106, 120.
- Sunday schools, 111.  
in Wales, 165.
- Superintendents, 52.
- Sustentation Fund, 117.
- Switzerland, Presbyterianism in, 61.
- Synods, 9.
- Syria, 204.
- Tanfield Hall, 116, 129.
- Te Deum*, 16, 35.
- Temperance Movement, 132, 149.
- Ten Years' Conflict, 115, 116.
- Torre Pellice, 48.
- Trevecca, 162, 164.
- Tulloch, Principal John, 125.
- Udall, John, 152.
- Ulster, plantation of, 144, 145.
- Union of English and Scottish nations, 101.  
of Churches in Scotland, 129, 131, 136, 137, 138, 142.  
Ireland, 149.  
England, 156.  
United States, 175.  
Canada, 182, 183.  
South Africa, 191.  
Australia, 194.  
New Zealand, 197.  
India, 205.  
of Churches all over the world, 214.
- Unitarianism, lapsing of English Presbyterians to, 156.
- United Brethren, 52.
- United Free Church, 138-141.
- United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, 129-135.  
in America, 176.
- United States, Presbyterian Church in, 171-179.
- Ussher, Archbishop, 145.
- Vaudois, 44.
- Veto Act, 115-116.
- Victoria, Australia, 193.
- Vinet, Alex., 61.
- Voluntaryism, 112.
- Waldenses, 43-49.
- Waldo, Peter, 44.
- Wales, Presbyterianism in, 161-169.
- Walker, George, of Derry, 147.
- Walker, Dr. N. L., 120.
- Wanamaker, John, 213.
- Wandsworth, first English Presbytery at, 152.
- Washington, 178.
- Watson, Dr. John ("Ian Maclaren"), 159.
- "Wee Frees," 139, 140.
- Wesley, John, 104, 156, 157, 163.
- West Indies, 208.

- Westminster Abbey, 86.  
  Assembly, 86, 153.  
  College, 159.  
  Confession, *see* Confession of Faith.  
  Directory and Catechism, 87.  
Whitefield, George, 104, 163, 164, 172.  
Whyte, Dr. Alexander, 213.  
Wigtown martyrs, 97.  
William the Silent, 36-40, 42.  
William III. of Orange, 40, 98-100, 146, 147, 156.  
Williams, William, of Pantycelyn, 163.  
Wilson, Margaret, 97.  
Wilson, President Woodrow, 178.  
Wilson, William, 103.  
Wishart, George, 63, 64.  
Witherspoon, Dr. John, 173.  
Wodrow, historian of Covenanters, 90, 178.  
Workman, Dr. H. B., 56, 157, 160.  
Worship—in Early Church, 8.  
  Holland, 41.  
  Scotland, 68, 110, 125.  
  Ireland, 149.  
  of Presbyterian Church to-day, 216, 217.  
Wyclif, John, 16, 50, 51.  
Zinzendorf, Count, 53.  
Zwingli, 61.

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